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LIFE IN SING SING

STATE PRISON,

AS SEEN IN A

Twelve Years' Chaplaincy.

BY

REV. JOHN LUCKEY.

New-York:
N. TIBBALS & CO., NO. 118 NASSAU STREET.

1860.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

The following pages are herewith submitted to the public by one hitherto unknown in the walks of authorship. It is the belief of the writer, that it will be well for the public to be made better acquainted with the internal workings of our State Prisons, and since his position has necessarily made him acquainted with many things not generally known, he has felt that it has become his duty to show them to the public. For the truth of the facts stated, he pledges his word, as a man of veracity, and for the opinions uttered, he is himself responsible; they have not been formed hastily, and their grounds are given in part in this volume. These sketches will afford the reader a fair and correct notion of some of the usual incidents of convict life, of the opinions and sentiments of convicts themselves, and it is to be hoped they will furnish information that may prove not wholly valueless to the unprejudiced searchers for truth in this department of social science.

These chapters have been written at intervals amidst the severe labors of the author's Chaplaincy in which he has charge of all

the religious and mental interests of more than a thousand souls, distributing to more than half of them books from the library once in three weeks, and closely superintending all convicts' correspondence with their friends, besides his more especially spiritual duties. The book is therefore sent forth, not for criticism, but to give *information*, and in the hope of awakening in the public mind a deeper and more intelligent interest in behalf of those unfortunate ones whose welfare he has so long been endeavoring to promote; and he is fully persuaded that many would do well in after life could they meet with a friendly sympathy when set at liberty.

J. L.

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INTRODUCTION

BY THE

HON. CHARLES C. LEIGH.

This interesting work I have read with pleasure and profit There is nothing got up for mere effect to excite the marvellous and make romantic heroes of villains. It is a simple and truthful picture of a life of vice and the awful consequences thereof, and as such deserves a place in every Sabbath School and Youth's library. Every father should put this Volume in the hands of his children, saying, "Read this, my child, and see the end that vice leads her victims to."

But while its tales of woe are written in simple strains, it illustrates the truth of the old adage that, "truth is stranger than fiction," and has more of the marvelous and exciting than is to be found in the highest wrought romance. Therefore, as a work affording interest and excitement, it will commend itself to the millions.

The whole community are agreed that the safety of the State demands that the convict shall not be permitted to continue his depredations on society—his confinement is necessary. This being accomplished, the community is safe; anything beyond this, is simple punishment, and so far the law is vindictive, unless this excess of punishment has for its object, to deter others from the commission of crime, or the reformation of the convict.

This State discharges from her prison from five to seven hundred convicts annually, who are left to mingle with, and become a part of, the community. It becomes then, not merely a question for the philanthropist to insist that he should be treated humanely while in prison, but every member of the community is interested that the prisoner should not leave his confinement with feelings of revenge and an abiding sense of the wrongs and injustice that society has inflicted upon him, and with purposes fixed to avenge those wrongs

And when he enters again upon society he should have aid and encouragement enough to save him from an idle and vagabond life, hat he may not become desperate, and compelled to beg, steal or starve. To accomplish this great work, the author of this volume has devoted thirteen years of his life.

"The discharged convict is a terrible enemy, and, in an important sense, stronger than the whole community. When he approaches your door to beg for a crust of bread, for labor, or shelter to screen him from the approaching storm, you see him in his helplessness; you feel your potency. The poor wretch can be crushed at a single blow. But let him go forth with the assassin's knife, or the incendiary's match, and a whole city may read, by the fires of a general conflagration, how terrible a foe the discharged convict is when left alone to himself."

If the convict is not reformed when he leaves the prison, society has gained nothing by his confinement. What can be done, asks the statesman and the philanthropist, to reform them? Mr. Luckey has always favored a firm but humane treatment of the prisoners. When they enter the prison they should be treated as guilty, but every means used, consistent with their restraint and their hours of labor, to effect a reformation in their character. Solitary confinement in the intervals of labor affords time for reflection, but then their minds must be educated up to a proper standard, and furnished with the right kind of books, or it will prey upon itself, and the man slide into beastly indulgence, idiocy or lunacy.

Not all the criminals are in our prisons, and not all confined therein are criminals. In the imperfections of human tribunals and the dishonesty of witnesses, the innocent sometimes suffer and the really guilty are cleared. There is now no power but the Executive that can save them. But enough has been said herein to open the eyes of the community and to cause them to inquire more particularly into the workings of our penitentiary system. Go forth then, little volume, on thy message of good will to man.

CHARLES C. LEIGH.

NEW YORK, March, 1860.

LIFE IN SING SING

STATE PRISON.

CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN OF MOUNT PLEASANT OR SING SING PRISON.

Auburn State Prison—Experiment of solitary confinement—Disastrous results—Building of Sing Sing Prison—Description—Rules—Punishments.

AFTER repeated experiments in prison discipline which proved to be defective in some vital particular, on the second day of April, 1821, the Legislature directed the Agent of the Auburn prison, which had then been in operation about three years, to select a number of the most hardened criminals, and to lock them up in solitary cells, night and day, without interruption, and without labor. In December, 1821, a sufficient number of cells were completed, and eighty convicts were placed in them. From this experiment results the very reverse of those which had been anticipated were produced; five of those who had been subjected to this confinement died within a year; one of them became insane, and another, watching an opportunity when his keeper brought him something

precipitated himself from the gallery; the rest fell into a state of such deep depression that their lives must have been sacrificed had they remained longer in this situation. Under these circumstances the Governor pardoned twenty-six, and the remainder were allowed to leave their cells during the day, and work in the shops of the prison. From this period, 1823, this system of uninterrupted solitude was abandoned at the Auburn prison.

This system which had been so fatal to the health of the convicts, proved likewise inefficient in producing reform. Out of the twenty-six pardoned by the Governor, fourteen were soon returned for new offences.

The failure of this experiment in solitary confinement, endangered the success of the whole penitentiary system. But Capt. Elam Lynds, who was at this time Agent of the Auburn prison, still held to the idea that the beneficial influences of solitude, which causes the criminal to reflect, might yet be combined with some successful Penitentiary system. He felt firmly convinced this end could be attained by keeping the convicts shut up in separate cells at night, and compelling them to work during the day in absolute silence.

The experiments were tried. Capt. Lynds assembled the convicts together, and giving them the rules by which their conduct must be governed, told them they must henceforth labor diligently, and labor in

perfect silence; that for any infringement of the rules which he had then given them, severe corporeal chastisement should be inflicted. The convicts were at first inclined to receive this as a mere threat; but they were soon convinced, from the energy of will and firmness of character exhibited by the Agent at this crisis, that submission was inevitable. Seconded by the able and unwavering exertions of the assistant keepers, Capt. LYNDS effectually succeeded in establishing this new discipline in the Auburn prison, and in 1824 it was sanctioned by the formal approbation of the Legislature. The adoption of the system of confining each convict in a separate cell at night, rendered the Auburn prison insufficient to accommodate all the convicts in the State. An act was therefore passed by the Legislature, on the 7th of March, 1824, authorizing the erection of a new State prison in the first or second Senate Districts. The Commissioners appointed under this act having selected Sing Sing for the location, employed Capt. LYNDS as the Agent to build and conduct the new prison at Sing Sing. He was directed to take from the Auburn prison one hundred convicts, to remove them to the ground selected for the site of the new prison, to purchase materials, employ keepers and guards, and commence the construction of the prison. The reasons for taking the convicts from Auburn, and transporting them so great a distance, instead of from the old prison at New York, which was but thirty-three miles distant,

were, the convicts at Auburn had been more accustomed to cutting and laying stone, and had been brought by Capt. LYNDS into the perfect and regular state of discipline which he had established at Auburn, and which was deemed by him to be indispensably necessary to their safe-keeping in the open country, and the successful prosecution of the work.

Capt. LYNDS accordingly took from the Auburn prison one hundred convicts, who, with their keepers, guard, baggage, and provisions, were brought to the prison ground, where they arrived without accident or disturbance, on the 14th day of May, 1825, without a place to receive or a wall to enclose them. On the same day a temporary barrack was erected to shelter the convicts at night; they were then set at work building the prison, making of each one a carpenter, mason, &c., and having no other means to keep them in obedience, but the rigid enforcement of discipline, and the firmness and energy exhibited by Capt. LYNDS. During several years the convicts, whose numbers gradually increased, were engaged in building their own prison, which was completed in 1829, and contained eight hundred cells.

In May, 1828, there having been a sufficient number of cells in readiness, the convicts in the old prison at New York, were removed to Sing Sing, and that prison was abandoned.

In consequence of the increase of convicts, owing to the addition to this Prison District of several

counties which were taken from that of Auburn for the purpose of relieving that prison from too great a press of convicts, the Legislature, by an act passed April 30th, 1830, authorized the addition of two hundred cells to the original plan. This was accordingly accomplished by raising the building another story, and finally completed in 1831.

The Prison is situated on the east margin of the Hudson river, ten feet above high water mark, about thirty-three miles north of the city of New York. The prison grounds, which contain one hundred and thirty acres, are bounded on the north by the village of Sing Sing; on the south by the small village of Sparta; on the east by the Highland turnpike; and west by the Hudson river, and may be approached by vessels drawing twelve feet of water.

The Prison, Keeper's house, and work-shops, are built of rough dressed stone. The Prison is four hundred and eighty-four feet in length, fronting westerly on the Hudson river, and forty-four feet in width, and communicates with the west yard by two doors, which open at its extreme north and south ends. The west yard is enclosed by two buildings forty feet wide, that on the north end being two stories high, and that on the south end three—one story having been added since the original construction. These buildings are now used as workshops; but when first erected were occupied as the kitchen, hospital, chapel, store-houses, &c., and extend from the Prison westerly to the river.

The south wing adjoins the Prison; that on the north is connected with the main building by a wall twenty feet in height, running north and south ten feet, thus enclosing an area of four hundred and ninety-four feet, by four hundred and twelve. This yard communicates with the east yard of the Prison, by an open archway, through the centre of the prison, and an arched gateway through the wall at the north end;—there is no door leading from the Prison into the east yard. The Hudson River Railroad passes through the east yard, close by the prison wall.

In the centre of the west yard is a large building, two stories high, occupied as kitchen, mess-room, and washing room, in the first story, and as hospital, chapel, and drying room in the second. There are also other buildings in this yard, which are used as workshops. The prison, hospital, and mess-room are heated by steam, generated by two large boilers in the kitchen. This mode of heating has been lately introduced, and contributes very greatly towards the comfort of the convicts in cold weather.

The guard house is situated on the bank, on the east side of the prison, about one hundred and seventy feet above the level of the yard, and commands a perfect view of the east yard, and most of the west. A little south-east of the guard house there is a separate building for the female convicts, erected in 1839.

This Prison is under the direction and government of three Inspectors, one of whom is elected annually

by the people, and holds his office for three years. The Inspectors have the power, and it is made their duty, from time to time, to examine and inquire into all matters connected with the government, discipline, and police of the Prison; the punishment and employment of the convicts; the moneyed concerns and the contracts for work, and the purchases and sale of articles provided for the Prison, or sold on its account. They also require reports from the Agent, from time to time, in relation to each and all of these matters. It is further their duty to inquire into any improper conduct alleged against the Agent, or other officers of the Prison.

The Board of Inspectors is required to meet once in three months, or oftener, at the Prison, to inspect the same; and on or before the fifteenth day of January in each year, it is their duty to make a report to the Legislature, of the state and condition of the Prison.

The Officers of the Prison consist of one Agent, who is also Warden, one Deputy Warden, one Chaplain, one Physician, and such number of assistant keepers and guards as are necessary to the safe keeping of the convicts, and the maintenance of good order. These officers are all appointed by the Board of Inspectors, and hold their offices during their pleasure. The Agent has the power to suspend, in case of misconduct, any of the subordinate officers, in the absence of the Inspectors.

"It is the duty of convicts to labor diligently, obey all orders, and preserve an unbroken silence. They are not to exchange a word with each other, under any pretence whatever, nor to communicate any intelligence to each other in writing; they are not to exchange looks, wink, laugh, or motion to each other. They must approach their keeper in the most respectful manner, and be brief in their communications; they are not to speak to them on ordinary topics, nor address them except when it becomes necessary in relation to their work or their wants. They are not at any time, nor under any pretence, to speak to any person who does not belong to the prison, or receive from them any letter, paper, or other thing whatever; they are not to leave the place where they are put at work, without the special permission or order of a proper officer; they are not to suffer their attention to be taken from their work, to look at visitors, nor are they to gaze at them when unemployed; they must not sing, whistle, dance, run, jump, or do anything which has a *tendency* in the *least* degree to disturb the harmony or contravene the rules and regulations of the prison. Their whole demeanor must be in accordance with the most perfect order, and in strict compliance with the discipline of the prison. No convict is willfully or carelessly to injure his work, tools, wearing apparel, bedding, or any other thing belonging to or being about the prison; nor is he to execute his work badly, when he has the ability to do it well.

For the willful violation or neglect of these or other rules, chastisement is certain to be inflicted." Until within a few years the method of punishing convicts for transgressing willfully any of the rules and regulations was by the infliction of stripes upon their naked back with the *cat*. This has been abolished; but whether the substitution of the shower bath is any less degrading and more humane, is a question on which there is diversity of opinion.

One thing is certain, however, that much more depends upon the sound judgment and humane feelings of the disciplinarian than upon the instrument of punishment which he employs;—hence, a *cruel* man should never enter within the walls of a prison, except as a convict.

CHAPTER II.

EXPERIMENTS IN DISCIPLINE.

The author of this volume was first appointed to the chaplaincy of the Sing Sing State Prison on the 24th of May, 1839, and a week afterwards he entered upon its duties. The sphere of the chaplain's action had hitherto been exceedingly limited, and there was a corresponding lack of efficiency in promoting the moral and religious welfare of the prisoners. There was no Prison Library; and the only books allowed to be used by the convicts were the Bible and the prayer-book of the Protestant Episcopal church. Many of the prisoners were entirely unable to read, and no efforts had been made to teach them; and no elementary books were provided to enable them to learn by their own efforts. No communications were allowed between the prisoners and their friends, neither personally nor by letter; and so thoroughly was this arrangement carried out that a convict from his commitment to his release was as completely cut off from his family as if dead; and when the time of his release at length arrived, he was often restored to his family only a mental and physical wreck. The new chaplain at once saw the evils of

this state of things, and determined to endeavor to find out a remedy for them. How far he has succeeded may be inferred in part from what the reader may find in these pages.

The condition of affairs as regards the discipline of the Sing Sing Prison, at the period of the writer's first entering upon the duties of the chaplaincy, will be seen by a few extracts from the report of a Legislative Committee, made to the Assembly, March 30th, 1839.

"In regard to the discipline and treatment of the prisoners, the Committee fully concur in a sentiment expressed in a report of Commissioners heretofore appointed to investigate the affairs of this Prison.

"That sufficient attention is not given to the operation upon the minds and feelings of the convicts; that it is not properly appreciated; that convicts, like the rest of mankind, are most effectually governed through the means of their mental faculties; that they are capable of reflection and judgment; actuated and impelled by the passions; influenced by hopes and fears; moved by stripes to anger and revenge; and entertaining even there, if permitted, pride and ambition. True, they are sent there to receive the punishment adjudged by the law for their crimes, and are continually reminded of it by their abject condition, and their entire subjection to the will of their keepers; but they should be led to believe that their sufferings are not aggravated, but rather alleviated by their officers; they should attribute their degradation to the strong arm of the law, and not be made to feel that their deepest suffering is the effect of petty tyranny. Their submission to discipline would not be

impaired, but rather improved by these means; the effect upon their minds would be salutary; and the hopes of reformation would be promoted!

"Your Committee believe that by carrying out the principle which seems to have been adopted at the Prison, of governing the convicts wholly by the fear of punishment, while at the same time no incentive to obedience and diligence or skill in the performance of their task is held up to their view, save an exemption from stripes, one of the most important objects sought to be obtained by the penitentiary system, the reformation of the convict, is lost.

"From the character of the discipline adopted, and the unrestrained license given to the assistant keepers to punish for such offences, and to such extent as they may deem proper, it has happened, as might have been expected, not only that different degrees of punishment are meted out by different keepers, but that cruel and unreasonable punishment have often been inflicted.

"Your Committee are aware that among the convicts are to be found individuals of the most abandoned and reckless character, and do not doubt that obedience must sometimes be enforced, and secured by stripes or other corporal punishment; but they believe that the infliction of eighty or one hundred strokes upon the bare back and legs by an instrument which multiplies every stroke by six, should not be tolerated for small offences or omissions of duty, nor in any case be repeated during several successive days. It appears by the testimony that such scourgings have frequently occurred at the Prison, and that too in more than one instance, when the unfortunate subjects of them were evidently insane, and for no other cause than that the convict made a noise, or talked, or would not work. One witness deposes to one thousand lashes inflicted

upon a maniac convict within the space of three weeks.

"Other convicts have been disabled from severe scourging, and been sent to the hospital to be cured; and even that sanctuary, it seems, does not always prove a protection from the *cat;* for it is sufficiently proved that some, who were at the time on the sick list and detained in the hospital, have been stripped and flogged. Contractors for labor at the Prison and the Prison-guards, have sometimes been permitted to inflict severe chastisement upon convicts. One or two instances have occurred where assistant keepers have been permitted to strip and whip the convict on his coming into the Prison, for insults offered to such keepers, or alleged offences committed previous to conviction. These keepers are not now retained at the Prison, but it does not appear that they were discharged for this cause."

About two months after I had entered upon the Chaplaincy Gov. Seward visited the Prison. During that visit I expressed myself freely respecting the importance of providing a Library for the use of the convicts. His Excellency requested me to write to him on the subject, and in compliance I soon after addressed to him the following letter.

MOUNT PLEASANT STATE PRISON, Aug. 8, 1839.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY GOV. SEWARD :—

Dear Sir :—When I had the honor to see you at the Prison, I mentioned the importance of furnishing it with books. . . . . It appears evident to me that while the punishment of crime is rendered necessary

for the peace and safety of society, and is therefore consistent with the principles of Christianity, humanity and religion require that such punishment be not unnecessarily aggravated by withholding from the delinquents the means of moral and intellectual improvement. The principle is conceded, I believe, by the ablest jurists in the country, that the prevention of crime is the sole object of punishment, and any punishment which is not absolutely necessary for that purpose, is a cruel and tyrannical act. How can it be possible that any should persuade themselves that the prohibition of suitable libraries for our penitentaries is a punishment absolutely necessary to their well being! That such a prohibition is a punishment to the prisoner, and a very great one too, none can doubt, who will take the pains to inform himself on this subject; and none, I am persuaded, can doubt the efficiency of moral and intellectual improvement in the prevention of crime. Why, then, should a most important means for such improvement be withheld? Much credit is due to the State for furnishing its prisons with the services of regular chaplains, and thereby affording the prisoners an opportunity of hearing the Gospel on the Sabbath, and of enjoying the benefits of religious instruction and consolation when sick. But the services of the chapel being early on the Sabbath morning, the remainder of the day, with perhaps a few exceptions, must be spent by the prisoners in solitude, with nothing to interest and occupy their attention save the unaided musings of their own minds. It is a law of the mind to be led by suggestion. In society, conversation and kindred means give direction to the thoughts which finally form the character of the man. But in solitude the individual is left to commune only with his own heart; and what train of reflections is to be expected of those whose minds are under the influ-

ence of the most disorderly and corrupt habits. Hence the importance of books for such, to give direction to their minds; and of good books to give them a right direction. As their solitary condition induces them to desire books to entertain them, and will induce them to read whatever may be furnished to pass away the time, who can calculate the amount of benefit likely to result from a supply of such books as are designed to inculcate correct moral principles. Now, sir, I am exceedingly happy to know from your own lips that our opinions on this subject are coincident; and I am persuaded that yours would be greatly strengthened were you present with me in my daily visits to the solitary cells, hearing those unfortunate men literally beg, and not a few with tears of contrition in their eyes, to be furnished with something to read that would instruct them in the way they should go." . . . .

In reply to this letter, I received from his Excellency the following communication:

ALBANY, October 7, 1839.

DEAR SIR: My correspondence has become so much deranged during my absence from the city, that I find I have neglected an acknowledgment of your very interesting communication of the 8th of August last. I have great pleasure in saying that all its suggestions seem to me both wise and benevolent. It is my purpose to call the attention of the Legislature to the expediency of making some Legislative provision for the instruction of convicts in the prisons, and I find myself sustained and enlightened by your communication. In reply to Mr. Wiltsie's suggestion that if he could be authorized to do so, he would procure sixty or eighty spelling books, I very cheerfully give my advice that it shall be done; and whatever of influence I

may have shall be exercised to procure the allowance of expenses incurred for that purpose, as well as obtaining the sanction of the Legislature to the same. I shall always be pleased to receive your communications on all subjects affecting the prison.

With sincere respect and esteem,

I am your obedient servant,

W. H. SEWARD.

The Rev. JOHN LUCKEY,
Chaplain of the State Prison
at Mount Pleasant.

In pursuance of the purpose expressed in this letter, Gov. Seward in his annual message to the Legislature, dated January 7, 1840, said: "The high reputation which this State had acquired from the improvement of its criminal code and from its system of penitentiary discipline, has recently become impaired by very general complaints of inhumanity in the management of our prisons. While the punishment of offenders should always be enforced with firmness, the spirit of the age manifestly requires that discipline shall be tempered with kindness, and that moral influences rather than severe corporeal punishment, should be employed to procure the submission and promote the reformation of the convict. I trust you will bestow early attention upon the defects of this system, and I respectfully suggest that provision be made by law for the instruction of convicts, and for supplying them with such books as shall conduce to their reformation."

In the next annual message of the Governor he refers to the same subject as follows: "The com-

plaints of cruelty which heretofore engaged public sympathy and brought our penitentiary system into disrepute have altogether ceased. Sunday Schools are maintained ; and, in pursuance of my recommendation, the cell of each prisoner is always supplied with a volume of the school district library.* This measure was followed by a gratifying improvement in the conduct of the prisoners. Many wearisome hours of solitary confinement are beguiled, resolutions of repentance and reformation are formed, and the minds of the unhappy convicts, accustomed to the contemplation of virtue and expanded by knowledge, are gradually prepared to resist the temptations which assail them on their return to society."

In the spring of 1840, D. L. Seymour was appointed Agent of Sing Sing Prison, and A. McDuffie principal keeper. The terribly severe measures, referred to in the preceding extracts, were in operation at that time. Labor was an exceedingly irksome task to the convicts, and, as a matter of course, no interest was taken in its performance. Escapes, or attempts to escape, were of almost weekly occurrence ; the convicts choosing, as they have frequently told me, to run the risk of being shot down by the guard than remain to be killed by inches.

But with the new officers came a new order of

* Mr. Seward having authorized the purchase, and the Legislature failing to make an appropriation, he paid the amount, some $300, from his private purse.

things—which has prevailed in the government of the prison, except for a short period, until the present time. The Agent required of his assistants the practice of a humane, forbearing and just intercourse with the convicts; and, in consequence, he exercised over the latter, both while they were in the prison and after their discharge, a corresponding moral control. The prison records show conclusively that this was accomplished without detriment to the good order of the prison, or the safe keeping of the convicts. The punishments were less severe and also less frequent; very few attempts at escape were made; unusual industry, and numerous instances of moral and religious reforms took place. Some of the old officers were amazed at Mr. Seymour's commencement; others stood aghast as they saw him enter the hospital and take part in the religious exercises. "Where will this thing end?" was a question in many a mind, as he went from cell to cell on the Sabbath, delivering tracts, exhorting the convicts to duty, and as he commenced a Sabbath School, taking charge of it himself and employing the better class of convicts for teachers when he could get no others. But when Mr. S. went so far as to spend a night in the hospital, during an epidemic, comforting the sick and dying, it was thought by some that his imprudence had exceeded all bounds. On that occasion a contractor, who had formerly been an officer in the prison, came to me with a most dolorous countenance, and, trembling with excitement, said,

"Mr. Luckey, you know I am your friend." "Yes, sir," I replied, "I have every reason to believe so." "Well, then," he rejoined, "will you do me the favor to speak to Mr. Seymour about the exceedingly imprudent course he is taking with the convicts? Why, sir, he is lowering his dignity, and will so destroy the discipline that in a month's time we shall have such a rebellion as no prison ever witnessed; we are already afraid of our lives." I told him that I had no doubt he really thought so, but added: "You will not press me into this service, I trust, for Mr. Seymour is doing the very things I have long desired to see done, and if you will wait patiently I think you will yet be convinced that he is right." Sooner than I had expected, my prediction was fulfilled, and the same man then said most emphatically, "Mr. Seymour is right!"

The Inspectors, in their report dated January 6th, 1842, say to the Legislature, "The report of the Rev. John Luckey, Chaplain of the Prison, exhibits a highly favorable account of the moral and religious condition of the convicts. The unwearied industry of the Chaplain in his department, his devotion to the welfare of the convicts, and his incessant labors for their reformation, entitle him to our warmest commendation. He does not appear to have labored in vain; many of the convicts, under his lessons of instruction, exhibit evidence of a radical moral and religious reformation. . . . The Sunday school for the convicts is still continued with evident benefit; and the convicts are fur-

nished from the library of the prison with books of a moral and religious character. . . . We consider the library of great importance to the convicts, occupying in useful reading that portion of their time which would otherwise be spent in idleness, and furnishing them with opportunities for intellectual and moral improvement."

"The conduct of the convicts during the past year, has been marked with submission and propriety; no attempts at insubordination have been made; they have uniformly been obedient and industrious, and have seemed to appreciate the efforts made for their moral and religious improvement." In Mr. Seymour's report (as Agent for the year 1842) I find the following reference to the moral condition of the convicts at that time. "The Secretary of the 'Prison Discipline Society' in his annual report has been pleased to ask the Agent, for the information of the public, What has been the effect of moral andreligious instruction on the prisoners? whether cheerful obedience, submission to authority, contentment, industry, and good will are produced, and escapes, insurrections, punishments and loss of time for misdemeanor are prevented thereby? I would answer from honest conviction, They are. There is no complaint latterly from contractors for not having sufficient work done, or for sullen disobedience or discontent on the part of the men; nor have we heard of but one escape in the whole three years we have been here, and we have

never had an instance of an attempt at insurrection. The reason cannot be for the punishments dealt out; for I understand from the keeper and assistants that it is rarely necessary to resort to any kind of punishment. And I would here say, in addition, that for the whole time I have been in the institution, no prisoner has ever spoken an unkind or insolent word to me."

In Mr. McDuffie's (principal keeper) report for the same year, a similar testimony is borne to the beneficial effects of the moral treatment of the convicts. "Great pains," he says, "have been taken by the Agent and Chaplain to furnish books of a religious tendency for the prison; so that the minds of the convicts might be usefully employed while in their solitary cells. The Chaplain, every Sabbath, preaches two sermons, one to the male and the other to the female prisoners. I should here state that there is a Sabbath school connected with each prison, where three hundred convicts are taught; one half of them are learning to spell, and the remainder can read well in the Bible. As soon as they can read they are transferred to the Bible class. At the close of the Sabbath school and church the convicts are returned to their cells. The remainder of the day is spent by the Agent and Chaplain in distributing religious books, and giving friendly advice to the convicts."

In 1843, a new Board of Inspectors was appointed, and being political opponents of the former Board, they must needs annul or change nearly all the rules

affecting the discipline of the Prison. Their next act was an investigation, by testimony taken under oath, in reference to the question whether mildness or severity ought to characterize the discipline. Capt. L——'s (the newly appointed principal keeper) views were well known, and as a matter of course his assistants,' who were called upon to testify, coincided with them. The same views were also entertained by the committee of investigation, and unanimously adopted by the whole Board. What these views were, will be seen by the following extract from the Committee's report: "To talk of the power of moral suasion in a community of felons, is to talk nonsense; to prate about the subduing power of kindness and sympathy among men whose very presence here is a proof that they have with ruthless hand torn asunder those ties of sympathy and love which bind together the family and the community, is worse than preposterous. The tiger in his cage may fawn and seem to be subdued under the hand that feeds and applies the lash, but open his prison door and he is again at once the tiger of the jungle. Your Committee do not deny that isolated cases may and probably do exist in every large prison, but we are satisfied they are few and far between. Another glaring abuse, we think, has grown out of the privilege granted the convicts of writing and receiving letters. Your Committee are constrained to differ *in toto* with the Chaplain of this Prison, on both these subjects;—we think he has, on this as on some

other subjects, sorely misjudged." Many of the old officers whose views were not considered orthodox by the new Agent, were removed. With one fell swoop, the Sunday school, prison correspondence, library, visitation of friends, and all those moral appliances for which I had labored so hard, were carried away for a time. After the "reign of terror" had recommenced and progressed several weeks, and I had dodged about in the hall and hospital and shops daily and with a sad heart, I found Mr. James Banks, Mr. Harman Eldridge, Mr. J. Weeks, and some other assistant keepers, desirous of continuing the mild system. They entered into a secret agreement to do so as far as practicable, unobtrusively, in their own shops. Meanwhile, the "knock down and carry out" system, as it was vulgarly called, went on from bad to worse for three months, when the Committee on Punishments made the following report: "They have examined the returns for the months of May and June and are dissatisfied with the amount of punishment which has been inflicted. In the former month over seven hundred lashes were inflicted, and in the latter over fifteen hundred—besides, in both instances, the amount inflicted by the Principal Keeper, of which *no report* has been made, and none required by law. In some of the gangs (shop companies) the punishment for the month has been no more than six lashes, while in others it has exceeded one hundred, and in one gang four hundred; and yet upon a careful examination the

Committee do not discover that the latter are under any better discipline, or any more orderly and well behaved than the former. Besides, the escapes recently made from the Prison have been by convicts belonging to those gangs where the greatest amount of punishment was inflicted." As soon as I saw this report in the Inspector's minutes, I said in my heart, "There is light beaming!" The "gang" reported of so favorably was that of Mr. Banks. At the next session of the Board the committee to whom was referred the testimony taken at the last meeting, in regard to the recent escapes from the Prison, reported "That in their opinion the investigation has not proceeded as far as the nature of the case requires. The charge has been publicly made and widely circulated, that these escapes have been caused by the cruelty manifested toward the convicts, and the truth of these charges ought to be fully investigated." I find no further notice on record of these charges, but have reason to believe that the Board found them too well substantiated to be willing to spread the testimony upon their minutes.

A few months from this time Mr. Edmonds, (President of the Board of Inspectors,) who had treated me with respect and kindness from the first, came to me and said, "We have come to the conclusion that we have neglected the *morale* of this prison too long." He then invited me to his lodgings that evening. I expressed my pleasure in accepting the invitation and

went accordingly. Mr. Edmonds remarked, "We desired to converse with you more on our own affairs than on those of the chaplaincy. You have observed the increasing number of escapes, and how we at first charged it to the tardiness and laxity of discipline, and that we have been accustomed to dismiss the keepers whose convicts escaped as not being rigid and severe enough, and thus we have been dismissing and thereby urging increased severity; and yet the escapes nearly equal two a week. Now, I want *your* views on this subject." I gave him my opinion freely, and demonstrated the correctness of my views by citing cases with which he was familiar; and told him that the convicts had repeatedly stated to me that they "would rather run the risk of being shot while attempting to escape than remain to be murdered by inches." I also informed him of the agreement entered into with Mr. Banks and others, and that he would find as the result of his management, that no keeper had so orderly, industrious and cheerful a gang as he. In the beginning, it was admitted, that none had charge of a more refractory set of men, and yet there had been no escapes from his shop, nor a single lash inflicted, for the last three months. "I see, I see, sir," was the reply; "I will take the Board to that shop to-morrow, and if it is as you say, former measures shall be restored." Mr. Edmonds afterwards informed me that they had visited Mr. Banks' shop, and found my representation of it to be correct. The eyes of the Board

were opened to the truth; they at once determined upon a return to the former mild course. Accordingly the Principal Keeper was informed that his services would be dispensed with, and Mr. Eldridge was immediately appointed in his place. At the same time I was encouraged to make application for the restoration of all those moral privileges which had been taken away, and at the suggestion of Mr. Edmonds, I submitted the following petition to the Board:

SING SING, March 14th, 1844.

To the Inspectors of the
Mount Pleasant State Prison:

GENTLEMEN,—Being persuaded that you are desirous of improving every opening for exerting a reformatory influence upon the convicts committed to your care, I the more freely submit whether a profitable use may not be made of the deaths which occur in the prison. Let the body be taken to the chapel, the convicts assembled, and, after a brief history of the deceased by the Chaplain, the necessity of repentance and of preparation for death be urged. It will be as a voice from the grave—the dead reasoning with the living "of righteousness and a judgment to come." As it respects the practicability of this course, the extent to which it may be carried, etc., are matters for the decision of the Board. * * *

Respectfully, &c.,

J. L——

On the receipt of this petition it was resolved,

"That the communication of the Chaplain be referred to a special committee."

"The committee to whom was referred a communication from the Chaplain in reference to the observance of funeral services when death occurs among the convicts, report, that the recommendations contained therein meet with their hearty approbation.

"It is an undoubted fact, that while much effort has been made to improve the discipline and carry out the designs of punishment, but little has been done to elevate and improve the religious and moral feelings of the convicts. A difficulty, however, appears to present itself as to carrying out this recommendation, from the fact that a large number of the convicts are employed by contractors at certain *per diem* rates.*

"Still, we cannot think that any of our contractors are so blind to their own interests (to say nothing of the welfare of the convicts) as to refuse their consent to the proposition; as it is past doubt that the more men are brought to act under moral and religious restraints, the more faithful and industrious they will be, and instead of a diminution in the amount of labor, we should be inclined to look for an increase. Your Committee, therefore, entertaining these views, recommend that when a death occurs in either prison, the body be removed at the proper time to the chapel in such prison, and the convicts belonging thereto be brought together to attend such services as the Chaplain shall deem proper.

T. M. NIVEN,
HENRY ROMER."

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* Aye; an insurmountable "difficulty" lying in the way of all reform.

"On motion, Resolved, that the report be accepted and that the suggestions therein be carried into effect. Carried unanimously."

In the report of Mr. Eldridge he says—

"In the month of May last, your Board gave directions to the principal keeper and chaplain to collect the Prison library, which was scattered around in different parts of the institution, and which had not been used for more than a year, authorizing them to make distributions among the convicts at their discretion and under such regulations as seemed to them right.

* * * * * *

"On the Sabbath day you can scarcely pass one cell in one hundred without seeing its inmate ardently engaged in reading his library book. Consequently, this indulgence in feasting their minds (or a majority of them) was so favorably received that all noises hitherto indulged in by them, such as whistling, talking, and thumping of their bunks and furniture has almost entirely ceased." . . . . "We have recourse to the lash only when it is ascertained that every other and milder way has been resorted to without effect."

In the Inspector's annual report to the Senate for the year ending 1844, they say, "One of the first subjects which attracted the attention of the present Board was the Sunday-school. . . . . Convicts alone were teachers. . . . . The employment of such teachers was forbidden; and the school, much to the regret of the Board, was abandoned for the want of teachers."

On the twenty-fourth page of this report, the Inspec-

tors say, "From a reference to the chaplain's report, herewith submitted, and which the Board have perused with great satisfaction, it will be seen how much has been done, even with the restricted means of the Prison, towards the reclamation of its inmates. From this exhibition of what has already been effected, the Board are admonished that with the power of increasing the means of moral instruction the advantages would be more than commensurate." And yet, strange as it may seem, the "Board" could not be prevailed upon to believe that in the abandonment of the school they were materially lessening instead of "increasing the means of moral instruction."

The reader will not fail to perceive that the "abandoned" Sabbath-school may have been the means of many of the reforms recorded in this volume; and it can be shown, I think, that the very reasons given for its discontinuance (the employment of convicts as teachers) was the principal cause of its disciplinary and moral potency.

CHAPTER III.

SUGGESTIONS AS TO PRISON DISCIPLINE.

It is a question involving important moral consequences, whether reclamation or demoralizatio shall be the result of our penal system. This is a question to be regarded not only by legislators, magistrates, prison officials, nor yet is it the question of a party, but it is one of State interest, and of the interest of society in its largest relations.

It is to be hoped that the time is not far distant when this subject will be much more fully considered and made an important branch of moral science, and treated as altogether worthy of the regard of the most distinguished minds. It is a question which every one may properly bring home to himself. An eminent jurist has appropriately remarked upon the treatment of criminals, that "no rank or condition of life, no uprightness of heart, no prudence or circumspection of conduct, should teach any to conclude that he may not one day or other be deeply interested in such researches."

Leaving out of sight, for the present, the individual good to be derived from the moral reformation of the criminal, it becomes a subject of high importance

as it bears upon the moral and social condition of the community. What is to be the moral character of the convict when discharged from prison, is a question of vital importance? Will he return to society a better man than when he was removed from it? It is a fact, of which long experience has thoroughly convinced the writer, that, by our penal system, circumstances are created which in many ways tend to the moral corruption of the inmates of our prisons. Though these circumstances are adverse to moral reformation, they have been met by a firm discipline, considerably moderated in its severity from that of former times, by intellectual culture, in a limited degree, and by the teachings of God's word: and, as I shall attempt to show in the progress of this work, these means have been in many instances attended with the most salutary results. What has been accomplished is only an earnest of what might be effected were the discipline and daily routine of our State prisons so arranged as to afford ampler means of moral and intellectual instruction.

The present age is happily distinguished above all which preceded it, by its numerous and diversified schemes of benevolence. The miseries and sorrows of mankind are met on every hand by appropriate sympathy; the accumulations of wealth and the treasures of wisdom contribute their respective shares to mitigate the sufferings of disease and the evils of poverty; while ignorance, the parent of crime, is re-

ceiving a fatal blow from those systems of instruction, which, to the glory of our land, are extending their benign influence in all its length and breadth. The minds thus enlightened must be influenced and disposed to use aright the knowledge acquired, guarded from the insidious temptations which are on every hand, and encouraged by proper motives and principles to an appropriate course of action; then, and only then, shall we be justified in the anticipation of moral improvement, in the formation of a sterling integrity of character, and the voluntary discharge of the obligations of the social state. This department has in all ages of the world been alloted to religion, and most assuredly it can be secured only by the healthful development of the religious element in society. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and in proportion as that sentiment gains the ascendency, will the mind be directed into its appropriate channels. Whatever auxiliary powers may be brought to bear upon the mind, religion is the only efficient agent in moral improvement, and of prevention to the growth of practical error.

It is, then, to the practical operation of the following conditions that we are to look, under the Providence of God, for the moral reformation of the erring; and to their consideration, illustrated by facts which have come under my observation during the twelve years of my chaplaincy at the Sing Sing Prison, I invite the attention of the reader.

I. A mild, but firm discipline.

II. Intellectual culture.

III. Religious instruction.

These several points have been brought to bear, as already remarked, to only a limited extent, yet to such a degree as to furnish indubitable evidence in favor of their far more extended application. They have been so far united, and mixed up in their bearing upon the individual cases which I shall bring forward as illustrations, as to compel me to consider them in the aggregate, leaving to the reader's own good sense the task of appropriating to each its respective share in the general result.

The only terms in the above propositions which seem to require definition are those contained in the first. By the term *discipline*, I mean the rules and regulations by which convicted criminals are to be governed during the period of their confinement in a penal institution. This is not its only application; but it is in this restricted sense I shall employ the term in these pages. It is evident that there must be rules and regulations in all penal institutions, and that these must be promptly and fully enforced, or there can be no efficient government, and of course, no hope of reform. By the phrase *mild* discipline, I mean such a code of rules and regulations as takes an enlightened and even charitable view of erring humanity; that distinguishes between the novice in crime and the old offender, taking into consideration

the habits and associations into which he has been led, through parental vice, moral and physical in some cases, neglect and wrong teaching in others, and over-indulgence in not a few. While the convict feels that his imprisonment is the punishment that society has ordained for the injury received in consequence of his crime, and a needed restraint upon his injurious practices and dispositions, the discipline should be so tempered that he will feel society has not abandoned him to the caprices of a class of men who have no fellow-feeling for him ; but that it has appointed those to watch over him, to instruct him, and lead him into the paths of virtue, who have an intelligent acquaintance with human nature, and who have hearts to sympathize with the failings and sorrows of their fellow-man.

By the term *firm* discipline, I mean such an exercise of the rules as shall possess a restraining influence, and cause their requirements to be strictly observed. I am no advocate for mere brute force in compelling submission to the rules ; but, when every other means, that an enlightened judgment dictates, have been tried, and fail, then submission must be compelled by punishments. At the same time the offender should be made to feel, that punishment is the very last argument the officers wish to employ, and that it will not be adopted till every other means has failed, but will then most surely visit the incorrigible. This will in no measure detract from the mild character of the

discipline; for the very idea of law supposes penalty. The common sense of every man accords with the remark of an eminent English writer on this point, when he says, "Law without penalty would be a solecism." So long as the necessity for prisons exists, there will always be a class of men who have grown old and hardened in crime, whom no persuasive arguments will materially affect, and who will take a diabolical delight in trampling, when they dare, on law and order. Under the present "contract system," such characters are scattered all through the shops, sowing the seeds of discord, and spreading contamination like a pestilence. Nothing will successfully restrain such beings but the certainty of severe punishment. Could these men be classed, so that they would have no opportunity of corrupting others less vicious than themselves, and kept apart from the rest of the convicts, on low diet, if necessary, to subdue them, and the prison be under the charge of officers of similar dispositions to those of Messrs. Seymour and McDuffie, the lash and shower-bath might be altogether dispensed with in prison discipline, and the number of reformations would be largely increased.

There are those who, I believe, honestly think that the number of convicted criminals who can be in any degree controlled by these means is very small; while I as honestly believe that the very reverse of this is the fact. My belief is not founded on mere theoretical views of human nature, but is the result of exten-

sive and close observation ; nor am I alone in this, as the history of other prisons in our own land and in Europe fully attests. The results however are only such as might be expected from the facts and circumstances of the case. A large majority of our convicts, though men in stature and strength of passions, are but children in intellectual capabilities, and consequently are easily influenced, for good or evil by the *master-spirits* among them. In scarcely any other body is "public opinion" more potential than in our prisons, notwithstanding the restrictions laid upon the intercourse of the prisoners. Want of independence of character is, in many cases, the cause of their being here, and, therefore, that discipline or prison management which, the most effectually, enlists the example and general bearing of the master-spirits on the side of order and moral reform, must be the most efficient in producing general and permanent reformation. This was attempted to be made practically available in the Sabbath-school referred to in the preceding chapter. It enlisted the feelings and influence of the controlling spirits in the prison, on the right side, and so became an efficient auxiliary in both the moral elevation and disciplinary control of the prisoners. The scholars were from among those who are "easily influenced" by superior minds, while the teachers were selected with reference to their capacity to teach and powers of control, as well as for their trustworthiness. The confidence thus placed in them, had, under the

circumstances, a sort of *regenerating* effect, and led them to determine that they would not, by any breach of trust, forfeit that confidence. These teachers not only influenced, by their orderly example, the members of their several classes while in the school, but also while at their work during the week; and as they were constantly encouraged in this work of reform by the presence and dignified Christian example of the principal officers, the reform aimed at was likely to be the more sure and permanent. During this enlightened administration, the contractors were allowed by the Statutory Law, to teach their men mechanical trades, which in *itself* was *conducive* to *permanent reform*, but the accidents connected with this practice were more so. The contractor would select his "boss" from among the most intelligent and best workman, and give him charge of some half a dozen "raw hands" to teach them the trade. The keeper was generally called upon to aid in this ceremony of installation. Take one instance of the reclaiming power of the principles we advocate as developed by this practice. In the latter part of 1840, one of our "smart" but troublesome convicts, sent for me to visit him, I was a little surprised but hastened to obey the call. "I have something to tell you that I know will give you pleasure," said he. "Well, what is it?" "I have resolved to become a better man—yes, and a Christian, God being my helper." "That is indeed good news," said I, "but what, may I inquire, was the cause of this blessed re-

solve?" "Well, I'll tell you: yesterday one of the convict's 'bosses' was pardoned, 'his apprentices' were left without a teacher. The contractor came to our keeper and after a few minutes conversation, I was called up. 'Well, Joe,' said the contractor, 'we have noticed your workmanship, and your capabilities for a more responsible situation; we have concluded to try the experiment of placing you over those men as 'boss.'" In taking my new seat I made a solemn vow to God and my own soul, that I would from that hour, live for God and humanity." The resolution was kept, and he influenced his fellow prisoners by his manly and Christian example, and also did well, after leaving prison. Napoleon Bonaparte evidently understood this philosophy of human nature, for he designedly awarded most responsible offices to some of the most dangerous men, as he said, "To keep them quiet."

The success of government founded on this philosophy is farther illustrated by the sketch of that desperate man, who "attempted to escape in a box."* Just as soon as the principal officers found an opportunity, *with safety*, to place him in a responsible situation, he began by his example to exert an influence upon his fellow-prisoners, as potent for good as it had been for evil. He, in concert with others, were the "master spirits" of the various "upstirs" in their several shops; and the more they were flogged

* See Chapter xi.

and "bullied" by the keepers, the more desperate they became, and would probably have lived and died "devils incarnate," instead of Christians, had not this brutalizing administration been superseded by one whose paramount object was *evidently* "reclamation."

Not more than two or three of these "convict bosses," to my knowledge, ever returned to prison; and with the original list containing the names of our Sabbath-school teachers in one hand, and the "Prison Register" or Reception Book in the other, I would here record the surprising fact, that, "to the best of my knowledge and belief," *not one of those teachers ever came back to this prison.*

Nor did over six per cent. of the eight hundred convicts discharged during those memorable three years, return to prison. Now, if there is a difference between the reformatory results of that administration and subsequent ones, what are the causes? "Is not the same chaplain there?" inquired one of our best secular editors lately. He is. But what, we would ask in return, can he do, in his restricted circumstances, against a swarm of hungry politicians without and gossiping croakers within? All the chaplain can do or say under such antagonisms, is indicated in his annexed reports.* But were the late Inspectors any less disposed to sanction reformatory

* See Appendix, A and B.

measures than their predecessors? I answer unhesitatingly, (as it regards some of them, at least,) "*No*, they are not." Some of them have, no doubt, entered upon their duties imbued with the same prejudices which, at their instalment, were possessed by Mr. Edmonds and his colleagues; but as their minds were thoroughly disabused by a few months' experience, *so have these been.* The difficulty in the case, however, is, that usage and "outside pressure" induce the Inspectors to make a change of prison officers their *first business* after the accession of a new Board to power; and, of course, a majority of *these* are dictated by the false "prejudices" alluded to, and hence a season of confusion follows. Then six months of "experience" passes, and the Inspectors "stand corrected." But how to correct the evils resulting from their change of officers, they are (in view of political consequences) at a loss to determine. At length, removals are spoken of. "Remove if you will," threaten those ignorant, idle, swaggering, and profane "convict drivers." "Remove if you will," cries a like class of prison "contractors." "Remove if you *dare*," is echoed back from the uninformed political demagogues without; while all join in the prophetic menace, "Remember this, gentlemen—that, by removing those '*efficient* officers,' you will most assuredly sign your own 'political death-warrants.'"

Notwithstanding the groanings of the prisoner and his friends, and the enlightened views of the Board

prevailing, changes are made, and then follow scenes somewhat in this wise: "What's the prison news, Bob?" inquires a political demagogue of one of the ex-officers. "The prison news," he repeats, as the "one glass more" is swallowed and the glass returned, "do you say? Why, sir, I'm told by the contractor's agent, that, since we left, there is scarce no discipline at all. He says that no extra work can be got out of them rascals without coaxing it out. You know we used to punish the d——d villains within an inch of their lives for such insolence. The fact is, them scamps do as they please, if so be they or their friends have the '*rocks*.' No one knows the *corruption* there is going on. No wonder they come back by hundreds."

So the work of detraction is begun and continued, till every "drinking saloon" in our village resounds with it. The partisan newspapers teem with it, and the Governor's and legislators' ears tingle with it. And so it comes to pass, that to a lamentable extent our prison laws and executive circulars are dictated by these unworthy influences, and the reformatory designs of the prison government greatly hindered. If our statesmen would base their legislative speeches and newspaper articles on *official reports* instead of the "uncertain sounds" referred to, they would be more likely to serve the public interest.

The connection of *party* politics with prison management dictates a different course; and under the

present order of things, there is very little hope of any permanent change for the better. A complete divorce of our whole penitentiary system from party politics seems to be in the highest degree desirable. The Inspectors should be appointed as formerly, or by the Judges of the higher Courts, to hold office during good behavior; and the Judges themselves hold their offices by a like tenure. This would secure permanency to the administration of the prison government, as well as remove it beyond the corrupting touch of the hangers-on of party. As a further and highly important means of improving the moral condition of the prison, and at the same time increasing the profits of convict-labor. The laws against teaching certain mechanical trades should be immediately repealed, and the practice of placing the convicts under the direct control of contractors discontinued. The "hopelessly incorrigible" should be separated from the other prisoners, and confined in other cells, and employed in separate gangs, and fed on a sparer and less agreeable diet, both as a means of punishment and of reducing their mettle.

The whole contract system, as now managed, is full of evils. It allows no means of punishment but *brute force*, or that which occupies the *shortest period possible*, so as not to conflict with the contractor's pecuniary interest. The contractor being forbidden by law to make those wares which are the most *saleable*, is compelled to harden his heart against his own generous

impulses, or suffer loss in his business. Hence it is, that the most of our violent "break-outs," and severe punishments are superinduced by the driving manner and words of the contractor's agent, acting upon the chafed feelings of the convicts. This miniature slavery affects the moral feelings of the convicts as unfavorably as it does those of the contractors, for, while they are easily persuaded of their moral obligation to abor for the State they have injured, and for their own support, it is quite difficult for them to acknowledge the claim of a third party to be enriched at their expense, especially when they are driven in the work (sick or well) to the last inch of their strength, or "*Bucked*" till they become *insane*, or raise a rebellion

The reader has already been advised of the fact that the facilities for improvement in the moral and religious department of this prison are decreased or multiplied according to the pre-conceived notions of the Inspectors and principal officers, and these notions are very materially affected by political party-prejudice. If one party, as was the case in 1840–41–42 allow of Sabbath-schools, a library of books, &c., just as soon as another assumes the reins of government and an inquisition for maladministration and "pollution" connected with the former administration, is made; the school, the books, and every other extra auxiliary become, of course, "the origin of untold pollution," and must, therefore, "be immediately discontinued."

Thus the Chaplain is left to *feel* his way along through this partisan mist of exaggeration, till he finds a favorable opportunity to win back the excluded appliances. The Sabbath-school was an agency of great good to the prisoners; and most of those who received pardon at the hands of Governor Seward, as well as those whose cases are recorded in this volume, belonged, either as teachers or scholars, to this Sabbath-school.

To show the strange attachment the convict-teachers had for this school, (for having no theological seminary as they have at Auburn, to supply teachers, we were under the necessity of associating a few of the "better sort" of convicts with the Agent and officers, for that purpose) take an instance. L. G. was a man of great natural capacities, some education, and gave evidence of a religious change. He was among the first we appointed as teacher. At our quarterly examinations, it was seen that his was the "banner class" in every respect. He had been in the school some two years, and in the prison fourteen, when, on the application of the Agent and myself, he was pardoned by Governor Seward. His pardon came on Friday. Messrs. Seymour, McDuffy, and myself went to his cell together to inform him of the joyful news, but imagine our surprise when, after expressing his thanks to all concerned, he, hesitating, inquired, "May I not remain here over the Sabbath?" Both of the gentlemen with me expressed their surprise that a man who had

been in punishment for fourteen years should *petition* to stay three days longer. "Gentlemen," said he, with evident emotion, "I cannot bear the idea of thus suddenly separating myself from my beloved Sabbath school class, do let me stay to meet with them once more." He stayed, and a more mutually edifying parting scene than that which took place on that occasion is seldom witnessed. Some ten years subsequently he was a frequent attendant upon my ministry at the Five-points, and I frequently accompanied him home to his happy Christian family circle. He died soon after in the presence of his pastor, who told me that he had seldom witnessed a more triumphant Christian death than was his.

CHAPTER IV.

A VAGRANT BOY.

An old offender—Vicious boyhood—House of Refuge—Plunder and Felony—Prison—Punishment—Blindness—Becomes a new creature—A good Keeper—Interesting Letters.

NEAR the beginning of the present century, a hardy, rough-looking, fatherless boy might have been seen chasing the fire engines, gambling upon the dock, and frequently disturbing the quiet repose of the swine, as he splashed along the gutters of the streets of our great metropolis. He possessed naturally a strong mind and tenacious memory, which, being denied both moral and intellectual training, tended only to qualify him more fully to be a master spirit in vice. He had neither pious parents to instruct him in the principles of religion, nor kind friends to lead him into better associations, nor to teach him the evil consequences of a course of vice and the lasting benefits of virtue and religion. His vicious propensities being thus unchecked, increased with his years and strengthened with his growth. After returning from his midnight rambles, he was frequently found asleep in some coal or sand box. Before he arrived at manhood, he was

twice conveyed to the House of Refuge. I think it was during his second term there, that he escaped from his confinement in the night; and thus eluding justice, he sunk still deeper into crime, and totally abandoned himself to depraved and vicious associations.

He had scarcely reached the years of manhood when he was arrested for, and convicted of, a crime involving State-prison punishment; and consequently was sentenced to the New York State Prison for five years. There, being confined most of the time to a cell or ward containing a number of convicts of similar propensities, instead of being reformed, he graduated in criminal science. At the expiration of his term, he re-entered the world with new and more perfect schemes of plunder and felony. Sometime in the year 1831, and only a few months after the expiration of his first term, he was convicted of a crime for which he was sentenced to ten years imprisonment in Sing Sing Prison. Here he found the "silent" and "solitary" system in rigid practice; and although the discipline was painfully rigorous and sometimes even cruel, it afforded time and motive for profitable reflection. On one occasion, after he had been there about seven years, he received, on his bare back, over one hundred lashes, with a threat from his keeper that as soon as his lacerated back became *partially* healed, he should receive as many more stripes, unless he would confess the offence with which he was charged.

He was accused by his fellow-convict, I believe, with

having maliciously broken a blacksmith's punch. I subsequently learned from the keeper that he was not punished so much for breaking the instrument, (which he allowed might have been an accident,) as for having "sauced him." The simple facts in the case, as nearly as I could ascertain, were the following. The subject of our narrative had unwittingly incurred the displeasure of a fellow-convict. This convict, through pure revenge, broke the tool alluded to, threw it on his fellow-prisoner's work-bench, and then hastened to the keeper with the above-named charge. The sauciness referred to, consisted in an attempt on the part of the convict charged with the offence to explain it to his keeper, whom he desired to convince that he was not guilty of the charge and therefore *could not* make the confession demanded. But, in accordance with the disciplinary regulations of the prison at that time, this attempt to explain was considered an *act of insubordination*, and the keeper might, without due consideration, have deemed it to be of sufficient magnitude to demand the severe punishment which it received. However this may be, the convict was hurried from the "whipping post" to his lone cell, with his back literally flayed.

This, in connection with the severe threat, produced extreme pain, and most dismal forebodings. He sunk exhausted upon the damp stone floor of his dark and gloomy cell, and prayed for death. As the lacerated part of his body became inflamed, pain increased, his

vision grew dim, and he began to think his hasty prayer would soon be answered. "Then," said he, "I began to enquire whether my prospect for happiness in another world was any more promising than for this; and for the first time in my life, I spent a few moments in serious reflection on death and eternity."

About this time the two following events occurred, which, because unusual, appeared to him providential. His keeper was exchanged for a pious and humane one; and a religious tract, which exactly suited the inquiring state of his mind, found its way to his cell.

It was nearly a year after this occurrence when I became acquainted with him. His new keeper directed my attention to him, as, in his opinion, a sincere inquirer after truth. On visiting him, and strictly observing his conduct for some time, I was fully convinced that he was not only "a sincere inquirer after truth," but also "a new creature in Christ Jesus." He attributed this great change to the sanctified instruction he had received principally from the tract; and so highly did he value it, that he carried it with him wherever he went during his confinement; and even the joy occasioned by his discharge did not cause him to forget and leave behind him this precious treasure.*

* I have forgotten the title of this tract, but distinctly recollect however, that it was published by the American Tract Society, and connected with the name of the Rev. Wm. A. Hallock, in a way not to be easily forgotten by the prisoner. I have frequently heard him say, as he pressed the treasure to his heart, "Though I never, to my knowledge, saw Mr. Hallock, yet I love him as I never loved

During the subsequent years of his imprisonment he made the Bible his chief study. It was suspended by cords, from the top of his cell, in such a manner as to be constantly open; so that, when in his cell, he had nothing to do but cast his eyes upon its sacred pages, in order to peruse it. So diligently had he studied this *precious book*, that when he was discharged he could repeat, from memory, any chapter in the New Testament to which his attention was directed. I ought to say, in justice to his keeper, that he, having unshaken confidence in the sincerity of this convict's profession, took great pains to encourage him in the paths of virtue and religion. It will be a happy period when those entrusted with the power of appointing prison keepers, shall duly appreciate the importance of selecting them with due reference to their mental and moral qualifications to serve this unfortunate class of men. Both the personal welfare of the prisoners, and the peace and safety of the community, which these men and women are destined to reenter, demand this.

The subject of our narrative retained the confidence of his keepers and the respect of all who knew him, while he remained in prison. His term expired July 9, 18—. He remained at my house a few days. When the twilight of the first evening after his release ap-

any man. And I intend to improve the first opportunity which occurs, to express my gratitude to him personally." This determination was, I understand, faithfully executed.

proached, he was visited with the same dimness of sight that he experienced on the occasion of his being so severely flogged: he was thus affected for several successive evenings. Nor could he walk erectly; but with a bowed back and trembling step, he groped his way as if he were still in his dungeon house, loaded with irons. I went with him to the city for the purpose of procuring employment for him; but found the attempt vain: appearances were against him. Official duties demanded my return home, and consequently I was under the necessity of leaving this friendless, penniless and homeless invalid, to seek employment, and carry out his purposes of reform as best he could. The following letter from him may be relied on as giving a correct statement of what occurred during the time it specifies:

"PHILADELPHIA, July 26, 18—.

"DEAR FRIEND:—I set out for Philadelphia on the 21st of July, and arrived on the 24th. Necessity obliged me to travel on foot. On the third day about eight o'clock, a little after sunset, I almost sunk beneath the weight of nature; my feet were so badly blistered that it was almost impossible to proceed. As I was about to cast myself upon the ground, not knowing that there was any house near, I heard a voice echoing through the trees. I soon reached the house, and was invited to come in, and never before was I received with such kindness. It seemed as if my steps were directed by 'a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.' It happened to be an Indian doctress. As I had suffered on the road from difficulty

of breathing, I related to her my case. She told me of a remedy which had cured her daughter of the same complaint. Next morning she sent her daughter to show me the root. I dug a large bunch of it. She told me I would not be troubled after I had used it up, and I have already experienced good effects from it. I am much restored in my body since I last saw you, and hope that my strength may increase.

"I have been greatly disappointed in Philadelphia. I have found the boarding house which I was informed was kept by my mother; and I have good reason to believe that she is in just such circumstances as represented to me. I have had her description by a man who lives in the same house; and it corresponds every way with my mother. I made an application to her daughter, requesting her to permit me to see her mother. I told her my business. She told me her mother was very sick, and said I could not see her. I questioned the girl, and found what she said corresponded with the very time I last saw her; I therefore determined to make a second trial, and tried to prevail on the daughter to induce her mother to permit me to walk up stairs and see her. I was very desirous to satisfy myself. She went up, and when she returned she told me I could not see her mother, as she was very sick; that she was not the person I was looking for. But I have good reason to doubt her word.

"I have met with a cold reception fromthose whom I once esteemed as my friends; I mean those that are relatives by the ties of nature. I found them in good circumstances, and well able to render me assistance under my present trying circumstances; but they did not as much as ask me to stop there until I could get a situation. They gave me information respecting my mother; and as I have found the place I have no reason to doubt their word. I tried to get a situation before

I left New-York, and I have tried in Philadelphia. I read over the door of an intelligence office, that they wanted a great many persons for different situations, and that they would not charge any thing. One situation would just suit me. I went in, and told the man I should like a certain situation, and he replied he would charge me a dollar for it. That was all the money I had in the world, and should I part with it I must lodge in the street. I am a stranger in a strange land, without friends, and almost without money. As it respects earthly relatives, I am fatherless, motherless, sisterless, and brotherless ; a poor, wandering orphan, without a home upon this mortal shore. But the promise is sweet, " Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain you." There is nothing in this world that has any attraction. The world with all its pleasures has died away. Food and raiment is all I want ; and how I am to get these I cannot tell. I would sooner starve than get them by dishonesty. I am in such low spirits on account of my disappointment, I hardly know what to do.

" I now close my letter, with a hope that this poor paper will meet with acceptance. As soon as circumstances will permit, you shall have what I promised—my narrative ; that is, if it please God to spare my life. I bid you, and all who are near and dear to you an affectionate farewell. In all human probability we shall never meet again in time ; but I do hope to meet you all in eternity, among those who have washed their robes white in the bood of the Lamb. No more at present. Give my respects to Mr. Seymour and Mr. M'Duffie.

Yours truly,

"____ ____.

" Rev. John Luckey."

This unfortunate man ultimately found an humble situation, and has thus far demonstrated the truth of the assertion, that he "would sooner starve than get a living by dishonesty." He is not satisfied by simply abstaining from evil; but spends his leisure moments in distributing tracts, and recommending the practice of virtue and religion. Seventeen years have already elapsed since his release; during which time he has been enabled, through the grace and mercy of God, to withstand the *peculiar* temptations with which he has been beset: hence we have reason to hope that he will continue in well-doing to the end. Let it not be forgotten, however, that if he is finally saved, it will be most emphatically "so as by fire." Had he, like young Timothy, "known the Scriptures from his youth," how much better would it have been, both for himself and society. Bible truths, connected as they are with unending rewards and punishments, operate most powerfully in restraining vicious passions and propensities. It is highly probable, therefore, that if, while his mind was young and tender, he had been thoroughly instructed in religious truths, he would have been saved from much of the misery which he suffered in consequence of his crimes, and community from the injury it sustained by his wickedness. His case is but one of thousands of youth who are left to follow, unrestrained, the promptings of their fallen and corrupt nature, by which they disgrace themselves, spread around them misery and woe, and finally find

a lodgment in our prisons. Had the parents of these unfortunate ones pursued the course with them which Timothy's mother and grand-mother did with him, how much evil would have been prevented, and what a lasting benefit conferred upon the church and the world.

CHAPTER V.

THE ORPHAN REFORMED.

The wandering orphan boy—Seeks employment in vain—Dock boys—House of Refuge—Stabbing—Sing Sing Prison—Contrition—Sent to a Clergyman—Letters—Success.

SOME twenty years ago a lad of thirteen called at several farm-houses in the lower part of Westchester county, N. Y., inquiring for employment. His tale was one of woe, such indeed as those living near the city are accustomed to hear, and therefore it fell from his lips unheeded. He was an orphan. Once he had a father and mother, who, although from causes he chose not to name, they had sadly neglected his moral and mental training, were, nevertheless, dear to his memory. His emaciated body, filthy person, and tattered garments, confirmed his story. Thus he wandered for many a day, seeking a shelter at night in barns, under hay stacks, and even in the solitary woods. On each application for work he was advised, after having received some cold victuals, to return to the city, and report himself to the commissioners of the Alms-house, or the managers of the Orphan Asylum. His ignorance, however, of the process necessary to

accomplish this object, together with his instinctive dread of those places, prevented him from following this advice.

If at this point in his history some *Sabbath-school* philanthropist had taken him by the hand, he would probably never have been compelled to endure long years of wretchedness within the gloomy walls of a miserable prison. Often have I heard him express, with much apparent feeling, this very sentiment. This privilege, however was denied him. Weary with making application for labor, and finding little or no encouragement, he returned to the city ; and soon found himself intimately associated with the "dock boys," among whom he subsisted solely by begging and stealing. At length his various pilferings became so palpable, that he was arrested, and sent to the House of Refuge. I am not sure whether he served out one or two terms of sentence there; but I am certain that it was at that place he received his first effective training. His depraved passions and pampered appetites having never before been curbed by a *steady hand*, he became, under this control, impatient of restraint ; and hence was induced, not long before his sentence would have expired, to take the lead in a conspiracy to escape. He was armed with a knife, with which in his scuffle with the officer he made two or three deep wounds in the body of that gentleman. They were not mortal, because not made in a vital part. This fact, however, was purely providential ; for the prisoner had become so desper-

ate with the mingled emotions of fear and anger, that he knew not and cared not where he struck. For this desperate act he was sentenced to the State Prison at Sing Sing, in 1830, for ten years. In the Spring of 1839, I found him there. After a few Sabbaths had elapsed, he sent for me to come to his cell. He did not know that I had been made acquainted with the history of his crime; hence his ingenuous confession of all the essential facts connected with it, attended as it was with tears of deep contrition, convinced me that "a greater than" Boz, Fowler, or even Comb, had been instructing his heart. I knew his term of sentence would expire in a few months, and therefore I paid special attention to his case; nor was the God of the orphan unmindful of his promise, but deigned to crown those few endeavors with hopeful success; for in a few weeks I enjoyed the privilege of observing this contrite prisoner rejoice in the power of redeeming love. He had heard that the prison officers had made efforts to procure his pardon, on the ground of his extreme youth and good conduct. "O," said he to me, "how glad I am that my release was not procured! for, had I then been pardoned, I should, no doubt, have returned to my former course of crime and probably expired on the gallows, and sunk my soul in torment. Besides, I am now conscious that I richly deserve all the punishment I received, and indeed much more. Now, I should be perfectly happy and contented could I but procure forgiveness from those

I have injured, and particularly from that good man whom I so wickedly stabbed." I could pacify him only by assuring him that I would, as soon as practicable, communicate his desire to that gentleman. On the occasion on which this pledge was redeemed, the good man wept, and said, "I do indeed, most cheerfully and heartily forgive him; and please tell him, from me, to live up to his high and holy calling, in the hope that we may at last meet in that blessed world where 'the groanings of the prisoner' are never heard."

Whisperings of alarm were heard at the corners of our streets; murmurings and demurrings were manifest. A strange thing had come to pass! A *convict just out of prison* was lodging with the Chaplain's family! It was the same orphan boy. His term had expired, and he wished to renew his strength at my house for a few days, as he designed to go to a neighboring city to seek employment. This was in the Spring of 1840. On the morning of his departure this pensive prisoner said, "In leaving your house my feelings are indescribable. It appears to me like parting from the only place on earth that I am permitted to regard as home, and bidding a final adieu to the only friends I have living. The recollections of the past seem but to inflict the severest wounds of conscience; while the future is beclouded with fearful forebodings, founded upon conscious unworthiness. Under these circumstances I instinctively shrink from the gaze of my fellow men, and sometimes am left to wish

I had died in prison. If, however, you will have the goodness to commend me to the care and attention of some clergyman in the city of ——, I will put forth my best efforts to *suffer*, as well as do, the will of God 'all my appointed time.'"

His request was granted ; and the houseless, friendless, orphan prisoner, again encountered earth's polluting scenes. He wrote to me, about once every six months. His letters breathed a spirit of modest, grateful, and rational piety. I learned from them that the clergyman to whom he had been sent, received him kindly, assisted him to employment, admitted him to church membership, and in every respect behaved as a father towards him. Just before my "connection with the prison was dissolved," I met the clergyman referred to at the depot in the city of ——

He was exceedingly happy, he said, in having an opportunity of informing me personally respecting the prosperity and welfare of my orphan prisoner. He, in a word, confirmed what the letters had said ; and added that the young man had married a respectable young woman, was prosperous in business, and, during the six years he had been under his watch and care, had conducted with great propriety. The clergyman, who was of the Presbyterian denomination, desired me to send him as many more of a similar character as I might have occasion to.

The plaintive voice from the early tomb of the young man's hopes is the voice that is still heard at

many a farmer's door. Let me beseech that worthy class of our fellow-citizens, as well as the community in general, not to disregard its humble wailings Had the complaints and solicitations of "the orphan boy" been heard and granted by them, the painful task of recording this tale of woe would probably have been avoided. How true it is, that "a word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver," and equally true it is, that an act of kindness performed at the *appropriate period*, is of much greater importance than one performed at random, or whenthe habits of vice are matured. Heaven forbid that I should ever say or do any thing, that might be construed into an apology for crime; but at the same time I must be permitted to implore the interposition of Christian charity and discriminating philanthropy in behalf of the novitiates in crime, and the evidently reformed criminal. The fact, that the prevention of crime is less difficult than its cure, is not, I fear, duly appreciated. I would therefore humbly invite the Christian and the philanthropist to look at this important subject as in the light of eternity.

CHAPTER VI.

JIMMY AND MOLLY.

Mother's love—Dying blessing—The wake—The orphans—Affection and sympathy—A father's harshness—Mother's grave—Mutual vows—Unhappy home—Brother's discontent—Leaves for America—Imprisonment—Sister's fidelity—Search for her lost brother—Reunion.

Poor Mary was sinking under that slowly wasting disease, consumption. She had two children; the elder a boy whom she named James, after his father; the other, a girl whom the father insisted should bear the name of his beloved Mary. The household names of these two were ever after "Jimmy" and "Molly," and by such cognomens I subsequently knew them. Never was an Irish mother more fond of her children than was Mary; and while she lived Jimmy and Molly were happy. The father, too, loved his children; but then he had a peculiar way of concealing it behind a cold, austere, and commanding countenance, so as to keep them ignorant of the extent of his love.

Jimmy and Molly had just learned to enjoy each other's society; to clamber up the rocks and steeps around their home together; to gambol o'er their wild

moorlands unrestrained, until little Mary's heart had but one lodging place aside from her mother's, and that was in "Jimmy's own breast." Thus they passed their youthful days in unalloyed pleasure. Jimmy was but a miniature pattern of his father, while Molly resembled her mother both in beauty of person and kindliness of disposition. Although thus wide apart as to natural temperaments, they were well mated for mutual improvement, and, consequently, for rational enjoyment; which, had they not been separated, would probably have continued to be the result. But they were doomed to part. In the midst of their increasing and innocent enjoyments they were called to receive the dying blessing of their beloved mother. As Jimmy afterwards related the circumstance to me, "She had only time to place her white bony hand, first on my head and then on Molly's, and whisper, 'the blessings of the Great God and the ever-blessed Virgin be upon you both, my dear children,' when she gasped, choked and died. Then," continued Jimmy, "my heart seemed to die within me, may it plaze yer riverence. I was just then about sixteen years of age,—old enough to feel my loss, while my sister was only about ten. Young as she was, however, she so far realized her loss as to cling to me with all her might, and weep and sob until I thought we would both die. We were interrupted in our mutual outburst of grief by the *keening*. The friends and neighbors, as I remember, knelt around the corpse and offered up a *pather* and an *ave* apiece for

the good of her soul. When this was done they all raised the *keena*, stooping over her, clapping their hands, and praising her for all her virtues. After the first *keening* the friends and neighbors took their sates about the corpse. In a short time, whiskey, pipes, snuff and tobacco were brought in, and every one about the place, barrin Molly and myself, got a glass and a fresh pipe. My father, when he held the glass in his hand, looking at our dead mother, filled up to the eyes, and couldn't for some time get out a word. At last, when he was able to spake, 'Poor Mary,' ses he, 'you're lyin' there low before me, and it's many a happy day we've spent with one another. From the time we were married we were never asunder!' Then, addressin' the neighbors, ses he,' She was younger nor me by two years, and I can never forget her ten thousand good dades to me and her two childther. Ah! look at them; poor motherless crathurs!—Yer health, Mary! and may God Almighty have mercy on your sowl!' My father drained his glass, and so did all prisent. Afther this the neighbors began to flock in more generally. When any of the relations came, as soon as they entered the door, they'd raise the shout of a *keene*, and all in the house would join with them, stooping over the body and clapping their hands as before."

The time of trial for these "poor motherless crathurs" began soon after the funeral. Their father's former coldness and rigidity towards them has been

more than hinted. Whether it was the strong resemblance, both in feature and disposition, that little Molly bore to her mother, that caused a relaxation of his frigidness toward her, or the tenderness of her age, I learned from their united testimony that such was the fact, and that she received nearly all the attentions he had to bestow. In the course of time, when the loved image and affectionate regards of his wife had partially faded from his recollections and new associations were taking their place,—especially when he had married another woman more congenial to his natural disposition,—his caresses, even for Molly, died away. As for Jimmy, there was nothing left but hard work, scanty meals, frowns and harsh treatment from both sides of the house. Molly was becoming a slave in-doors, and Jimmy both out and in. When their work was done, they would frequently steal away into some lonely nook, and weep, and talk of their mother, and try to fortify themselves for neglects and hardships to come; and sometimes, on Sabbaths and holidays, they would go to their mother's grave, and while they wept, renew their mutual vows of constant love. And from such a spot, and filled with such emotions, they would return to the house to be abused by her who had taken their mother's place, and to be neglected or frowned upon by their father.

Molly's disposition enabled her to bear this treatment better than Jimmy, and hence she was ever striving to cheer and encourage him. As he approached man-

hood he became restless and resisting, and secretly resolved to leave for America. For a long time he kept this purpose a secret from Molly; but as the time drew near for the execution of his plans he ventured to hint it in a round-about way; he did this by way of preparing her mind for the event, as well as to give her some idea of where he might be found. The terrible outburst of anguish, as the matter broke upon Molly's mind, made Jimmy feel that he must either abandon his purpose, or else deceive Molly into the belief that he was only joking. He adopted the latter, and satisfied her for the time. The warning she gave Jimmy at the time he told me, had been always present with him. "If, my dear Jimmy," said she, "you go away among strangers, without my counsel and affection to restrain and comfort you, bad luck will come to you." "Ah," said Jimmy, "she knew me better nor I did meself; for I have had nothing but misfortunes and sadness ever since I deceived that best of sisters."

He was not far from twenty-one, when a ship captain was surprised to find him, the day after his ship sailed, stowed away in the hold with his bundle of "goods and chattels" for a stool.

"Who is this?" demanded the captain.

"'Tis I, entirely," says Jimmy.

"Well, but who is 'I,' you rogue?"

"Jimmy, the orphan, to be sure, an' it's to Ameriky that I'd be afther goin to, may it plaze yer honor."

"Have you any money to pay your passage?" inquired the captain.

"Niver a h'penny, may it plaze yer honor; but thin does yer cargo pay its own passage, and arn't I a part of that very same?"

"Get out of that, you fool," thundered the captain, "and go to work, and I will put you ashore at the first landing place."

True to his threat, the captain set Jimmy ashore at the first port he entered, which, I think, was Boston. At any rate, Jimmy's first residence in "Ameriky," for any length of time, was in New Hampshire. There the prediction implied in Molly's warning soon began to be realized. By his own confession, he gave way to a loose, unsteady, dissembling course of life. When he had been in this country about a year he formed an unhappy matrimonial alliance; and in less than a year after he left his wife and removed to New York. He was not long in that city, before he was arrested, convicted of forgery in the second degree, and sentenced to five years' imprisonment at Sing Sing.

Respecting the prison life of Jimmy, during its first four years, I have but little to say, as there was nothing peculiar about it. He sent for me to converse with with him at his cell, as others did; he made his declarations of partial or entire innocence, as others made them; and finally asserted that he had commenced a "truly religious life." He either saw from my countenance, or gathered from my replies, that I had

but little confidence in him; so he almost entirely ceased to send for me during two full years. When he sent for me again, it was to inform me that he had learned to read in Mr. Seymour's Sunday School; and that he was now convinced his being sent here was over-ruled for his good. It was then, and at subsequent visits, that he spoke so affectionately of his "dear Molly, his only sister," whom he had left in Ireland some six or eight years before.

"My dear sister," he would say, and generally with great emotion, "was the pride of my life, and the soul of my joy. I have spent many sleepless nights and wearisome days, in recalling to my mind our childish plays and youthful rambles. Troth and may it plaze yer riverence I can't keep back the tears when I think how the beautiful little crathur would dance and gambol by my side as I went to my daily toils. I can niver forget her."

As I never found any *secular* theme more conducive of moral reformation, than that of a domestic character, I encouraged him in these trains of reminiscence by various and frequent inquiries on the subject. Let me here say, that one important opportunity of reclaiming the wayward hearts of our prisoners was lost by the old rule, prohibiting the chaplain from conversing on such subjects, and confining him exclusively to "dogmatical theology." The excuse made for its enactment was, that the convicts would impose upon the chaplain fictitious accounts of themselves and families, always

and exclusively, with sinister and mischievous designs Such a reason is indeed by no means flattering to the common sense or intelligence of the chaplain; who certainly ought to be quite as competent to detect attempts at imposition as other prison officers, and certainly he has the very best opportunity to do so.

But, to return from this digression, I was convinced that Jimmy was *now* speaking of facts; that the hypocrisy and deceit in which he had been in vain trying to enshroud himself, had been thrown aside by the agency of home associations and moral influence. It is unnecessary here to enter upon the process of reasoning by which I arrived at my conclusions respecting this change in Jimmy; it is enough for me that it was progressing, and I have reason to believe, ultimately accomplished. I now suggested the propriety of writing to his sister, but found him very reluctant to let her know that he was in prison, still, however, he professed his resolution to return to her, if it should prove, as we afterwards ascertained was the fact, that his wife had abandoned him.

By the perusal of his bible and other good books, a marked improvement became visible, which continued until the period of his discharge from prison.

About four or five months before the expiration of Jimmy's time he sent for me to visit him at his cell. I found him weeping, whether from joy or grief I could not tell by any outward indications. He related a dream of the night before, respecting his own dear

Molly, and the assistance she rendered in drawing him out of a deep, miry ditch, into which he had been thrown by a pony they had been riding together, and concluded with the emphatic declaration, "Now I am persuaded I shall see my sister again, and through her affectionate regard and watchful care I shall be taken out of the ditch of mire and clay into which I have fallen, and be preserved from future snares." Thus he interpreted his dream; nor could any one shake his confidence as to its fulfilment. When the difficulties that lay in the way of her finding him under the circumstances in which he was then placed, were urged, he would reply, "O, you don't know as I do, the perseverance, the affection, the energy, and the wisdom my sister possesses." A few weeks after Jimmy's dream, which, I confess, did not strike me as being in any way remarkable, my office door opened, and one of the guard ushered in a sprightly, blooming, well-dressed, and intelligent looking Irish girl. "This woman," said the guard, "has been inquiring after James, who, she says, is her brother; the Agent says he don't think there is any such man here, but you would know, as you have volunteered to attend to such business." I could scarcely express my thanks to him and the Agent, on account of the sudden and extreme agitation the name of James had produced. The fact that this was, indeed, Jimmy's long lost Molly surprised and affected me. After giving the girl a seat I went out and requested that Jimmy should be

sent for. On my return I said to her, "Don't be downhearted; I think, as there are so many here with assumed names your poor brother may yet be found amongst them." As she was in the act of making a reply, the door opened. "Is that he?" I inquired, pointing towards the door. She sprang to her feet; they each gave one bound, and Molly and Jimmy were firmly locked in each other's arms. The scene that followed is beyond description. Suffice it to say, that in the most graphic and touching manner she confirmed all that Jimmy had, for the few months previously, been re-iterating respecting himself and his family.

"Didn't I tell you, Mr. Luckey," said Jimmy, "that my dream would come to pass—that I should see my dear sister again?"

"Yes," I replied, "and you also said, that she would not leave you until she saw you delivered from your present condition."

"Neither will I," was Molly's prompt response, "provided I can get a place to stay at in Sing Sing, should I have to work for my board."

"You shall stay at my house," was my reply, "as Mrs. Luckey is in want of a girl just now."

Again they embraced each other, renewing their vows of love and devotedness.

"When will you come and see me again, Molly?" inquired Jimmy.

"As soon as the authorities of the Prison will permit," was Molly's modest reply.

"Mr. Agent," said Jimmy, "when will my sister be allowed to visit me again?"

"Not until three months have expired," was the Agent's reply; and this was his invariable answer to all such inquiries.

Jimmy burst into tears; but Molly plead for some relaxation of the rule, with all the eloquence of the warm Irish heart of a sister, who had suffered inexpressible mental torture, during the long years of separation from her only brother. But it was all in vain.

"I am placed here," said the officer, "to carry out the rules and regulations of the prison, and not to mend them. I cannot yield to your request."

Poor Mary! she became very much agitated, grew pale, sobbed convulsively, and arose to leave.

"Never mind, Mary," said I, "you go directly up to the house on the hill yonder, ask for Mrs. Luckey, give her this note, and I promise you, that you shall hear from your brother every day as long as you stay at my house; besides, it is scarcely three months to the expiration of his time."

This speech dissipated her gloomy apprehensions, and away she went with a much lighter step than that which brought her to the prison.

Every day of the three months that she remained at my house, served for a new development of the excellencies for which her brother had so repeatedly said she was celebrated, and gave me renewed confidence

that Jimmy's determinations to lead a better life would meet with encouragement from his sister, and gather strength from her approval. On the following Sabbath Jimmy sent for me to visit him at his cell; and on reference to my note book, respecting the interview, I find the following record:

"*James* ——, while in chapel to day has determined to seek the Lord with all his heart. 'You tell me,' he says, 'that if I confess and forsake my sins God will hear my prayer, and that *now* is the accepted time. I believe it, and will try to do so.' He thanks me most heartily for taking his sister into my house."

Every evening, on returning home, I was pretty sure of meeting Molly standing on the brow of the hill, just outside the guards, straining her tearful eyes to get a glimpse, if possible, of her dear Jimmy, as he was marching into the hall; but she looked in vain! Oh, how my heart did ache in sympathy for that girl! She could see nothing beneath those striped, tattered garments her Jimmy wore, but the companion of her childhood, the loved one on whose arm she had leaned when

> "Through the orchard and meadow,
> And deep tangled wild-wood,"

they used to roam in conscious innocence. "Why," said she, "why must I be kept from seeing my poor afflicted brother?" Why! sure enough thought I. Had the authorities of the prison taken the pains to understand this case, which is far from being alone,

they would have known that her personal influence over Jimmy for good was more efficient than a thousand "cats." When shall day dawn on the night of prison management!

Throughout the whole period of Molly's stay with us, there was a manifest struggle in her mind between "light and darkness." She was frequently seen with "Jimmy's bible"; and she never voluntarily absented herself from our family devotions. Sometimes she would clasp her hands and earnestly ejaculate, "God help me, but I am afraid I have committed the unpardonable sin." Thus she struggled on, gradually advancing in light, until her brother's term expired. The scene of their meeting, when he was once more a free man, was, if possible, more affecting than the former one. I must, however, leave it to the reader's imagination, as words cannot convey an adequate description. She could never be made to believe in Jimmy's guilt, notwithstanding he avowed it; at the same time recording his belief that out of his punishment he had received good.

Jimmy tarried at my house, while his sister went and found a place amongst the milkmen residing in the suburbs of Brooklyn, for both of them to work at. Having sent me word that she had obtained situations for both, I went immediately with Jimmy to the place. Two years rolled away when I visited them, and found them happy in each other's society, doing well, united to an evangelical church, and Mary comfortably mar-

ried to a religious man. Soon after that visit, they moved to the far west, leaving behind them an excellent reputation.

I have already intimated, that a frequent recurrence to home and its fond endearments, has a softening influence on the prisoner's mind, and becomes a powerful auxiliary in reaching his heart with the gospel of Jesus Christ. There are two very important objects thus favorably effected,—the reformation of the individual, and the observance of discipline. It is for these reasons I have been the unwavering advocate of frequent intercourse with the prisoners' friends, where they are not known to be really vicious, both by correspondence and personal interview.

CHAPTER VII.

POOR JACK—THE CONVERTED NEGRO.

A Governor's visit to the Prison—Poor Jack—Affecting Scene—Pardon granted—Visit to his cell—Prayers and exhortations—Future course—Preaches—Visits the Prison—Kind reception by the officers—Exhortations—Wonderful influence of his piety—Dies a Christian.

THE following narrative is, in part, derived from occurrences which transpired at the Prison during a visit of Governor Seward and suite, in Sept 1840; and in part from the history of a negro convict, during his imprisonment, and after his discharge. The moral power and grandeur of the grace of God are exhibited in the manly, yet humble and Christian bearing of a "sable son of Ham," who, amid all the discouragements and difficulties which surrounded him, had cultivated an intimate and personal acquaintance with Him, "whom to know aright is life eternal;" and who, under circumstances of much embarrassment, had learned to read the "word of life," and store his memory with those priceless truths, which, while they reform the heart, strengthen and improve the intellectual and conversational powers.

The Governor, addressing himself to the Prison authorities and other officials, spoke as follows :—

"Gentlemen officers:—with these my friends, I have come to take a view of this most troublesome and yet important institution."

Agent. "Your Excellency does not, I hope, intend to be understood that the present officers have, through neglect or otherwise, suffered this to become a *troublesome institution?*"

Gov. "By the appellation *troublesome*, I referred chiefly to the never-ending applications for pardon made to me. I shall not pronounce upon the management until I shall have investigated it; and as our visit will be brief, let us proceed immediately."

Chaplain. "In passing through the shops, your Excellency will doubtless meet with a number of very 'troublesome' applications for pardon. The difficulty attending such applications is, that those who will make them are, almost exclusively, amongst the bold, impudent, and self-sufficient, while the modest, retiring, and truly deserving convicts will deem themselves unworthy to approach your Excellency without the interposition of their keepers."

Gov. "The difficulty you suggest, strikes me as one being very likely to occur; we will, therefore, pass directly through the prison, and on returning to the office, send for those convicts whose cases may be thought worthy of investigation."

Immediately on the departure of the Governor and suite, attended by the Principal Keeper and other citizens, the Agent, addressing himself to me, inquired;

"Well, Mr. Chaplain, who shall we recommend the Governor to send for? There are several who desire to see him. I doubt, however, whether many of them can show sufficient cause for extending clemency in their case. They will be required, as near as I can learn, either to produce evidence of an improper conviction, an unjust sentence, genuine repentance and probable reformation, or that kind of physical ailment which would endanger life unless released from prison."

Chaplain. "I am aware that such are the requirements of the Governor, and I believe them to be just. The pardoning power has been, and still may be, abused, and I am, therefore, gratified with his adherence to these requirements. There is one convict whose case meets them with hardly an exception."

Agent. "Who is it?"

Chaplain. "Old Jack."

Agent. "You are right. We will send for him. The Governor and his friends will have the benefit of at least one hearty exhortation, if they never get another."

The Governor having returned, the Agent inquired, "Well, Governor, how are you pleased with our prison arrangements?"

Gov. "I see nothing very objectionable. I must say, however, that the library is a much more agreeable sight to me than the 'cats,' and I hope the day is not far distant when the moral influence of the former will render the latter rarely necessary."

Principal Keeper. "We are adopting means to produce this desirable result, with as much dispatch as circumstances will admit. We meet with many obstacles that mere theorists would hardly think of; yet we hope to accomplish much towards this object."

Gov. "I am happy to hear you speak so encouragingly on this subject. Where are those convicts who wish to see me in relation to pardons?"

Agent. "We have sent for one, sir, who will soon be here. In the mean time allow me to say, that he possesses the confidence and good will of the officers and convicts, and we think you may rely upon what he says. That gentleman is the Governor, Jack," who had just entered with slow and solemn tread, bowing indiscriminately to each and all.

Jack,—with cap under his arm, and a low bow—"Thank you, master."

Gov. Well, what have you to say to me, my man?"

Jack. "My lord Governor—Oh, how good is my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to spare the unprofitable and worse than useless life of your unworthy servant, to see this glad day, when I may freely speak before my lord the Governor concerning my offences and my sufferings. Eight years ago last spring I engaged to go a-boating, for a merchant, during the season. My wages were small, and I had a family to support. Throughout the season I received barely enough money to keep them from starvation, being put off with pro-

mises of payment in the fall, when I should need them to purchase my winter stores. When fall came, and the boat was laid up, I called upon him again and again, but was as repeatedly sent away with an invitation to call again. At last I was commanded to be gone, with the assurance that I never need expect anything more. Against this I objected, when the gentleman ordered two of his men to put me off the premises. I said, 'there is no necessity for that, I will go of my own accord ;' but wickedly and rashly added, 'I will have my rightful pay.'" Then placing the palms of his hands together, and turning his eyes, already filled with tears, upward, he continued. "You see, my lord Governor, I was then a very wicked man, and knew not how to trust in the providence of God for food to eat, and raiment to wear. I had no grace to control my ungodly passions, and teach me to love my enemies ; so, to my shame and disgrace I speak it, I carried out my threat. I went at night and pried back the lock of the store door with a large jack-knife, and took a pair of boots, and sufficient cloth for pantaloons and vest—about as much in value as I thought was my just due, and no more. I had the clothes made in the neighborhood, and wore them without attempting in the least to disguise it. But the holy God would not permit such high-handed iniquity to go unpunished. So I was arrested, convicted on confession, and sentenced to this place for ten years. I have been here seven years, able and willing to work, until last

summer, when I ruptured myself, since that time I have been gradually failing. And my lord Governor, I can truly say, that I am ready to go to my happy, happy home in heaven. When I came here I could not read; I knew nothing about the great goodness and love of the adorable Saviour; but now I can read his blessed book, and rest my sin-polluted soul upon its many precious promises, which, I find to be 'yea and amen in Christ Jesus.' Often in the stillness of night, while stretched upon my bed, have I awoke repeating the language of the poet,

'Oh, that the world might taste and see,
The riches of his grace;
The arms of love that compass me,
Would all mankind embrace.'

I have desired most of all, that the gentleman who sent me here might taste the sweets of redeeming love." At this point in Jack's discourse, there was a general and simultaneous feeling for pocket handkerchiefs, and a frequent application of them to streaming eyes as he added, "And, now, seeing that the Lord Jesus Christ has been so merciful to me, as to grant me a free pardon of all my sins, may I not ask my lord governor to grant me a pardon too?"

Governor, "You are right, Jack, the blessed Savior *is* rich in mercy unto all who truly repent of their sins, and call upon him."

Jack. "True, my lord Governor, true; or he never would have had mercy on such a vile, ungodly, hell-deserving rebel as I have been."

The whole scene became at this stage in its progress, too much for the excited feelings of the deeply interested by-standers; so that while one seized a pen and paper and hastily adjourned to another room, a second thrust his head through a raised window to hide the coursing tears he could not restrain, and the rest were not ashamed to show with what force the honest simplicity of the Christian negro had taken hold on their sympathy and hearts, compelling the fountains in their heads to send forth gushing streams.

Governor, resuming. "Well, well, Jack, you can go now, and we will consider your case."

"*Consider the case!*" said the gentleman who had left the room a few minutes before, now re-entering as Jack retired, "not long, I hope, sir,—here, put your name to that, if you please," presenting the Governor an order for a pardon, which he had just written. The other gentleman who had thrust his head out of the window, withdrew it, and addressing himself to the Governor, declared, "Upon my word and honor, Mr. Governor, you shall not leave this prison, unless you have more physical strength then we have, until you sign that order, and at once release that man. He is altogether too pure to be here. Why, sir, he has a great window to his heart; anybody can see right into it. There is no more guile there than there was in good old Nathaniel. He is the most wonderful man I ever saw."

Chaplain. "I think, Mr. Governor, I *know* Jack, and you will allow me to say that, in my opinion, he will not betray any confidence your Excellency may repose in him. I will warrant his good conduct for at least two years, which stretches far beyond the *trying* point. Besides, if there ever was a case which met the conditions on which Executive clemency is usually extended, this is one ; for, first, he cannot live long if he remains here ; second, he has, in all conscience, suffered long enough for his offence ; and, third, State prison discipline has wrought in him all that it ever can or will effect."

Agent. "Please accept of my pledge with the Chaplain's. This is as clear a case as ever called for your Excellency's interposition."

Governor (signing the order). "I will send this order directly to the Secretary of State, who has some blank pardons with my signature ; he will fill one up for this poor fellow and forward it to you immediately. In the meantime you may dress him up, and send him out to breathe the air of freedom once more ; but, remember, I hold you and the Chaplain to your respective pledges."

Agent. "I have not the least apprehension on that score."

"Come, Mr. Chaplain," said one of Jack's intercessors, who had not yet seen or heard enough of him,

"go with us to the good old man's cell and hear what he says respecting his liberty."

Having reached the door of Jack's cell, I said to him, "Jack, I have come to inform you that you are once more a free man; the Governor has heard the pleading of these two friends in your behalf, and signed an order for your pardon."

Jack deliberately laid aside his crust of brown bread, and, dropping upon his knees, poured forth his thanksgivings after the following manner:

"O thou God of all my mercies, be thou pleased to bless my lord the Governor. May he long live to show kindness and mercy to the poor and wretched, and bring him at last to his reward in thy blessed kingdom above. And oh! do thou abundantly bless these two white gentlemen, who have so kindly plead the cause of a poor black man, who thought he had no friends, because he deserved none. But thou hast heard the groanings of the prisoner, and hast put it into the hearts of these dear men to intercede in his behalf. Bless them and their families with all spiritual blessings and temporal mercies. And now, my blessed Father in Heaven, be pleased to remember in mercy my dear minister the Chaplain, and the other officers of this prison; and give the spirit of repentance and supplication to my fellow-prisoners. Abundantly bless, I pray thee, my old master, who, under the direction of thy providence, sent me here. Grant all these blessings and mercies, for the sake of him who loved

me and gave himself for me; and let thy presence go with me to give me rest, now and ever, Amen."

Jack now arose from his kneeling posture, and approaching the cell door, addressed himself to us. "You will, I hope, pardon my apparent indifference, when I say to you that I always feel it to be my bounden duty on important occasions, first of all to pray and give thanks. Will you have the kindness to bear my humble thanks to my lord the Governor, and tell him that I am quite sensible that I have 'nothing to pay;' but I am going to beg of Him, whose is the earth and the fullness thereof, that he would pay that debt for me, and I am sure he will hear the voice of my supplications. And now, gentlemen, how shall I express my gratitude to you, for all your kindness towards a poor degraded prisoner. Let me invite you to seek, if you have not already, the reconciled favor of that Friend who sticketh closer than a brother. Your unworthy servant has proved him to be such. Verily, verily, my dear friends, his favor is sweeter than life and stronger than death. Many a time, within the gloomy walls of this prison-house, the language of the poet has been the language of my heart:—

> 'While blest with a sense of his love,
> A palace a toy would appear;
> And prisons would palaces prove,
> If Jesus would dwell with me there!'

Yes, gentlemen, this damp, dark, and narrow cell has

often proved a palace to me; and if it were the will of my heavenly Father to have it so, I would just as soon go from that humble cot to my home in heaven as from a bed of down in a king's palace. Yet I am truly thankful to you, and to my lord the Governor, for your kind intentions and merciful acts. I now take it for granted that it is the will of God I should go out and try to do a little good; and you may depend upon it, my dear friends, that I will use my best endeavors not to forfeit the confidence reposed in unworthy me."

"We have no doubt on that subject, Jack," was remarked by one of the gentlemen," and now we must leave you. Good bye."

"Farewell," said Jack, "and may God bless and preserve you!"

While passing through the hall, one of my companions asked the other, "Were any two sinners ever prayed for more heartily, and exhorted more affectionately than we have been this day?"

"We shall never sin so cheap again," was the reply. "I am a perfect baby; I never cried, in all my life, as much as I have to-day."

"Well, Governor," said one of the gentlemen, "we have had the best of the wine at the last of the feast. Oh, you should have been there to hear him pray for you, and bless you, and us, and the whole world. He says he is not insensible to the debt of gratitude he owes you, but *he* has nothing to pay. He intends,

however, to beg all the days of his life of *One* who can and will reward you,—and I tell you, Governor, he is good at that business ; you will have no cloak for your sins after this."

His companion added, "I own that I never witnessed such a combination of simplicity and dignity in any person, as has been exhibited by Jack on this occasion. Every word he uttered, and every movement he made, produced an unusually thrilling effect upon me. I have listened with undivided attention to eloquent appeals from orators of every profession, but none ever effected the continuous softening influence that this old colored man has done. It is well he ceased when he did, or I, too, should have fled to the window. You will have the goodness, Mr. Agent, to send him directly to my office when he is discharged."

The Governor and suite having taken their departure, the Agent remarked to me, "If Jack's pardon arrives the day after to-morrow, and the Governor thought it would, I shall take the liberty of sending him to your house to lodge for the night ; and you will, of course, see him safely on board the boat in the morning."

As I gave my cordial assent to this arrangement, the Agent turned to the hospital-keeper, who had just entered, and informed him that Jack was pardoned.

"Good, good!—none more worthy!" was the exclamation.

Agent. Mr. P., you will select the best attire for him that our citizen wardrobe contains.

Mr. P. Why, sir, there are none on hand but threadbare, shabby concerns, altogether unfit for a man who has labored as long and as faithfully for the State as old Jack has.

Agent. That is true; but you know the law limits us to ten dollars for shoes, hat, under-garments, and indeed the entire suit. No convict, however worthy, can have a suit which, in the aggregate, would be worth more.

On the departure of Mr. P., the Agent fell into a sort of musing soliloquy: "What a mean policy! There is a man who has labored seven years for the State, and has worked so hard and faithfully that he has rendered himself unfit for future labor. I am sure that the moral influence which his serious and devout demeanor has exerted over his fellow-prisoners, was a thousand times more advantage than the paltry sum a good suit of clothing would cost. This matter ought to be left to the discretion of the principal officers. Well, the *law* cannot prevent me from going to my own wardrobe in his behalf. He shall go out decently dressed if my coat and pants will fit him."

The next day, Jack came to my house "decently dressed," praying over and exhorting everybody he met. The next morning, on our way to the boat, he met several of the assistant keepers, who severally congratulated him on his release. He had a thank-

offering, a prayer, and a blessing for all ; and none, however doubtful in respect to " convict pretensions," seemed capable of resisting the mysterious influence of Jack's valedictory.

There was not a keeper in the prison, who was at all acquainted with Jack, that did dot respect him on account of his serious and consistent deportment ; while those of them who believed in the reality of experimental religion, regarded him as a Christian in heart and life. Many of the convicts, also, became convinced that Jack was a righteous man. Those who occupied the cells near him, had listened for months to his morning and evening devotions. They had witnessed his moving lips and tearful eyes during the chapel service. They had noticed, also, his cheerful and uniform obedience to the rules of the prison, and his profound respect for the officers—hence, they could but respect him. In a place where such living examples of rectitude of deportment are, in the very nature of things, scarce, the absence of Jack was seriously felt, and by none more so than by the Chaplain.

Jack went directly to Mr. B——'s office, as he was requested. Mr. B—— received him kindly and took much pains to procure employment for him, but without success. Jack set out for his former place of residence on Long Island, with the proposed intention of seeking employment, until it should be obtained, and then return to Mr. B——'s, for his prison Bible, and other articles he left there. Several months passed

away, but no intelligence from Jack. At length it was thought best that I should go in quest of him. I went as far as Islip, on Long Island, where I learned from a colored man, that he had found employment with a farmer in South Oyster Bay, and that Mr. Henry L. Jones, of that place, could give me all necessary information. I also learned that Jack was well and doing well. My informant had met with him several times, at their general meetings, where he had taken a part in their religious services. It being inconvenient for me to visit Oyster Bay, I wrote a line to Mr. Jones, and turned my steps toward home.

Many months again passed away without bringing any information respecting Jack. This continued silence produced misgivings in the minds of some, inasmuch as it is well known to prison officers, that the first few months after a convict's discharge are emphatically *trial* months. My opinion was, that my letter to Mr. Jones had miscarried, I therefore wrote again, and in due time received the following letter in reply.

South Oyster Bay, April 26th, 1842.

Dear Sir :—Your communication of 19th inst. has been received, and I answer your inquiries with much pleasure. When Jack first came to the island, he called at my house and desired to work for me. I was not in want of a man at the time, but seeing that he was a respectful and decent black, and also that he conversed well, I felt an interest in him, although ignorant of his former history. A neighbor of mine

was in want of a man, and it being a good situation I told Jack to call upon him, and say that I sent him. He was employed, and kept his situation more than a year. His associates were of good character, and, I am informed, he is now a member of the Methodist church. Throughout the neighborhood he bears a good character, and has given satisfaction to the persons for whom he worked. At present he is working for a farmer at Flushing, L. I. He left this part of the county with a high reputation for steady and industrious habits. I feel happy in being able to render so favorable an account of one in whom you justly feel so much interest, and under whose instructions, probably, a human being has been fitted for restoration to society.

May you go on in the good work, and be the means of restoring many more is the sincere desire of

Your very obedient servant,

HENRY L. JONES.

REV. JOHN LUCKEY.

Within a week or two after the receipt of the above letter, the agent and myself set out for Flushing, to visit Jack. On our arrival, we called upon Mr. G——, a respectable tradesman, who informed us that Jack was on a farm about half a mile out of the village,—that he had seen him almost daily,—that a more industrious, dignified, and respectable colored man he had scarcely ever seen,—that he was beloved and respected by all classes of community, and that he had succeeded in greatly improving the condition of the African church, since his residence there. He also stated that Jack preached at two other places where

he was both acceptable and useful. After being thus encouraged, we set out for the farm-house. It was nearly dark when we reached it; a bright fire was blazing on the hearth of its old-fashioned Dutch kitchen. The moment we turned the corner of the dooryard fence, and came in front of the large window, there appeared standing near the fire, a tall and majestic form, slightly bending forward, with hands clasped and face upturned, exhibiting signs of earnest conversation. We involuntarily, and at the same moment exclaimed, "That's he."

As we entered the room, Jack broke forth in language as follows:

"Dear, blessed Lord, how good thou art, to permit thine unworthy servant to meet these dear friends once more in the land of the living! Are you well, my dear masters? and how are all my good friends where you came from? The blessed Lord knows how often and sincerely I have prayed that I might live to see what I now behold."

Agent. "Well, friend Jack, you can be no more rejoiced to see what you now see, and to hear what you now hear, than we are. We are all well, and are exceedingly gratified to see and hear that you are both well and doing well."

Chaplain. "We have but a short time to stay, Jack, and wish to hear a brief account of matters with you since you left us. Mr. Jones and Mr. B. have informed us of so much of your affairs as came under their no-

tice; but let us hear something respecting your difficulties, and church connexions."

Jack. "As it regards domestic matters, they have proved the severest trial I have met with. As to my wife and children, I have learned comparatively nothing. The last information I have been able to glean respecting her is, that she had been persuaded to marry another man, and had removed with him to a distant part of the country. It was a severe trial when I reached the spot where I hoped to give both her and my children an agreeable surprise, to find the beloved and familiar faces were gone, and to be momentarily stricken down by the conviction that I was forsaken by my own household. It was, however, but momentary; for, falling down upon my knees on the abandoned spot, my heart repeated, 'Though he slay me yet will I trust in him.' How mightily was my poor lonely spirit cheered and encouraged when I had poured out my soul in prayer, and fully resigned my all to the tender care of Him who careth for us. It was then I began to feel it was God's will that I should devote my gifts, weak as they were, to the service of his church—every excuse and impediment being now removed. I immediately offered myself to the church, was received, and began to labor in public for the good of souls. Then, indeed, 'my peace became as a river;' and about the same time the employment spoken of by Mr. Jones in his letter was procured for

me. Thus you see how good my blessed Master has been to a poor forsaken black man."

Agent. "We understand that you preach every Sabbath, here, at Jamaica, or at Brooklyn."

Jack. "Yes, master, I endeavor, in great weakness, to do so, and my soul is blessed and comforted in these feeble efforts. I often wonder how the people bear with my ignorance. All the learning I ever received was at your school. I don't know that I ever coveted more earnestly any gift than that of knowing how to write, that I might be able to address a letter now and then to you and the Chaplain."

Agent. "Well, as you cannot write, suppose you pay us a visit soon. The keepers want to see you once more."

Jack. "I did not know that I would be allowed to visit the prison, and shake hands with the officers again. I thought it was contrary to the rules for a discharged convict to visit the prison."

Agent. "So it has been; but we have a right to make rules, or abrogate them, when it does not come in conflict with the statute law. At any rate, we will venture to make your case an exception."

Jack. "I will come, providence permitting, some time during the season."

Chaplain. "Try and get there on Saturday night, so that you can spend the Sabbath with us. You may not know that we became pledged to the Governor in behalf of your good conduct for two years, and as

the time is now up we intend, immediately on our re turn, to write him, and also send him Mr. Jones' letter. What special message shall we bear to the Governor from you?"

Jack. "You may tell my lord Governor that poor Jack thinks of him morning, noon, and evening. I ask my Lord Jesus Christ to bless him and spare his life for future usefulness. If you see the other friends who were with him, remember me kindly to them also."

After some further conversation we left him, and returned home.

I immediately addressed a letter to his Excellency respecting Jack, and other cases of a similar character. A few days after, I received the following reply:

ALBANY, May 12th, 1842.

MY DEAR SIR:

Your letter of yesterday, giving me information of the persevering good conduct of the poor broken-hearted negro that I pardoned in 1840, with similar agreeable reports of several others who have been heretofore selected as objects of Executive clemency, has been received. I thank you most sincerely for this mark of your kind recollection and respect, and I tender you sincere congratulations upon the evidence which these cases of reform present of your untiring and enlightened labors for the care of souls, in the responsible department assigned you. . . . I sent a pardon, the other day, for the weak and broken-hearted S——, of D——.

Very truly your friend and obedient servant,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

REV. JOHN LUCKEY.

About four months after our return from Long Island, Jack paid us his promised visit. It was Saturday evening when he arrived. The assistant keepers were assembled in their hall; the "all right bell" was about to be rung, when Jack's old keeper came running up stairs and requested that Jack might accompany him to the hall, as the keepers, one and all, desired to shake hands with him. A scene then ensued, which, to be appreciated, should have been witnessed. I occupied a position where I could see and hear all that was said and done. Jack stood in the centre of the official circle, presenting the same contour of figure as when standing before "my lord Governor," replying to every inquiry made, in the same artless, devout, humble, and yet dignified manner. The questions put to him in general, referred to his health, manner of living since his discharge, and his resolutions and prospects for the future. Whether it was the cheerful solemnity of his countenance, the pathetic intonations of his voice, the piety manifested in every word and act, or the gratitude which breathed over all and through all, or the whole united, that produced a universal respect, I cannot say; but that such was the effect there can be no question.

During the chapel service on the ensuing day, Jack occupied a corner of the house, breathing forth his devotional aspirations as in former days. When the convicts were returned to their cells, and dinner was over, the Agent, Jack, and myself went into the hos-

pital to attend service with the sick. Jack was prevailed on to lead in the services. He took his stand between two rows of cots, and addressed the invalids as follows: "My fellow-prisoners—through the abundant mercy of our Heavenly Father, and the kindness of your esteemed officers, I am permitted to address you on this occasion. I have suffered in like manner with you too long, and too deeply, to be indifferent to your painful and trying condition; but my Heavenly Father taught me, as I pray he may teach you, that my sins and crimes were the principal cause of my suffering. He inclined my heart, as I hope he will yours, to seek pardon. Then, I was happy, indeed. Then, the gloom of my cell was taken away. Then, anger, and malice, and envy, were exchanged for love to all mankind. Then, this very room, under the prospect of a speedy dissolution, appeared as the 'house of God, and the gate of heaven to my soul.' Yes, God knows that I love and pity you, and that I have remembered you in my humble petitions to the throne of grace. Now, will you not pray for yourselves? Pray that your sins may be set before you in their true light,—that you may see your vileness and weakness, and that you may have the spirit of true repentance; then, you may hope for pardon and peace. Then, you will be prepared to meet the snares and temptations of the world, should you live to get out; and, certainly, without this true repentance you are not prepared to die. Had *I* not been led to see the

'exceeding sinfulness of sin,'—had I not been led to 'flee for refuge to the hope set before me,' I would have long since fallen a prey to the temptations I have been called to encounter." He then knelt down and offered a most fervent and appropriate prayer. There but few present who did not shed tears.

Jack's old keeper happened to be on hall duty that day, and watching his opportunity met us on our return from the hospital and requested the Agent to permit Jack to go with him for a short time. The Agent knowing this keeper to be skeptical in regard to experimental religion, inquired for what purpose he wished Jack to accompany him. The keeper replied, that he wanted Jack to see and converse with some of the men on his gallery, and he would attend with him. The men on this gallery worked in the shop where Jack had formerly been employed, and many of them had witnessed his conduct both before and after his professed change of heart. Consent being given, I enjoyed the privilege, unnoticed by the parties, of witnessing the interesting scene. There stood Jack at the door of the cells, saluting his old companions in bonds with a low and graceful bow, and saying, "We are again permitted to see each other's faces in the land of the living. The Lord has been very good to us both, in that he has spared our unprofitable lives to behold another blessed Sabbath of rest. How good it will be for us if we so repent of our sins and believe in his name, as to gain that

rest that remains for the children of God. Farewell. May Heaven bless you!" After this manner he went from cell to cell, until he had passed along the entire gallery, the keeper following at a short distance, but so near as to hear all that was said. "A more interesting hour," said the keeper, "than that which I spent in hearing Jack's admonitions and counsels to those deeply affected men, I never enjoyed in that hall." No word, look, or movement of Jack's during this visit to the prison, all of which were closely observed, could, by any possibility, be construed into a violation of the strictest rules of prison intercourse, or citizen etiquette. He lodged at my house, conducted the morning and evening family devotions, and on Monday morning took his departure for his place of residence.

About six months after his return, I received a few lines from him; but being unpracticed in the arts of composition, and his knowledge of orthography limited, I shall not present the letter itself. Jack was in good health and spirits, and laboring in the vineyard of his Lord and Master. How Jack learned to read I never knew. During his seven years' confinement he literally "picked up" the ability. His knowledge of writing, such as it was, he obtained while employed in the business at which he was engaged, by marking the heads of barrels and hogsheads. Being naturally simple hearted, and his reading, while in prison, necessarily confined to the New Testament, he was led with the more ease, to place implicit confidence in

Christ's teachings. From this pure source he obtained the knowledge of his sinful condition and the remedy. From this same source he gained that mysterous power of affecting the human heart with his simple style; and learned to meet and overcome the temptations peculiar to his situation. He had a special right, therefore, to glory in the cross of Christ, and to converse in *Scripture style*. But little more remains to be said of Jack. He has gone to his "happy, happy home in heaven." He has—

> "His body with his charge laid down,
> And ceased at once to work and live."

For fourteen years after his release from prison, he had been faithful to his God, manifesting his faithfulness by his zealous and untiring efforts to save souls. He died while returning to his home after having fulfilled an appointment to preach. His record is on high.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CONVICT T——.

The Convict T.——. Frequent punishment—The Causes—Results—His pardon—Placed in my charge—Visit to New York—District Attorney—Rev. Sam'l Luckey, D. D.—T——'s Stupidity—"Lock-step"—Mayor's office—Tombs—The convict O—— P——. Mental and physical ruin—Excitement—Its cause—Pardon—Dismissal.

SOMEWHERE about the close of the 18th century, a bony Irish lass was united in wedlock to the man of her choice, and soon after the newly married couple emigrated to this country, and took up their abode in the city of New York. In due course of time a son was born to them, who grew up a healthy, active, and affectionate lad; but being the only son, he was, of course, much petted, and generally permitted the exercise of his own will; hence, he might frequently be seen following the fire engines, or roving about the docks to see the ships and steamers as they arrived, or mingling in the numerous gatherings of the idle and carousing; and, as might be expected, forming acquaintance with those "whose feet are swift to do evil," and acquiring habits of expenditure that almost invariably end in misery and woe. In the midst of

this career of folly he was deprived by death of the little restraint his doating father had imposed upon him. After the *few* days of mourning, occasioned by this sad event, were over, T., for that is the initial by which I shall designate him, became more than ever engrossed in those demoralizing and expensive pursuits; while the mother's affection, which before was divided between her husband and son, now concentrated on the latter, and led to a corresponding increase of indulgence.

Thus "spending his substance in riotous living," and earning nothing, T. was first led to petit, and then to grand larceny, for which he was finally arrested and convicted, and sentenced to the State Prison, by Judge Riker, on the 13th of December, 1820, for fourteen years.

When T. entered the prison he was twenty years of age, strong, healthy, and of sound mind. The Prosecuting Attorney, from whom I received the principal part of T.'s early history, had long been acquainted with his family, and never ceased to manifest his sympathy for the mother until he procured T.'s release. This, however, was not obtained before he had been in prison twelve years, and, by the hardship he endured, ruined in all the nobler part of man. He was at Sing Sing during the building of the main prison, and being an athletic man he was selected as one of the men for carrying the heavy blocks up the gang-planks, on a hand-barrow, and placing them on the

scaffold for the masons' use. When his strength began to fail, as was to be expected, considering his youth and the fact that he was previously unaccustomed to labor, he asked to be changed to some other employment. Instead of his request being granted, he received, in accordance with the letter and spirit of the discipline then exercised, a severe reprimand; and whenever the request was repeated, which, I understood, was frequently the case, he was unmercifully flogged with the never-to-be-forgotten "cat," on his bare back. Another cause of frequent flagellation in his case, as well as that of many others, strange as it may seem, was the result of the affection he bore for his mother. No letters or visits from the friends of convicts were then allowed, hence T. would watch every opportunity of gaining some intelligence of the welfare of his mother. Consequently, upon every new arrival of convicts from the city, when one was placed near him he was sure to whisper something like the following inquiry: "Have you heard or seen anything of my mother?" and the principal keeper was just as sure to receive the report, if indeed report at all were made, "T. P. received twenty or sixty lashes," as the case might be, "for talking." In those days no opportunity was given to the convict for explanation by way of palliating his criminality; but the punishment followed the offence, to use the words of the agent, "as soon as the report of the thunder succeeds the lightning." From these, and other real or imaginary

causes, T. was flogged almost weekly; and yet, it was acknowledged that he was not actually a malicious and stubborn convict. When, in the spring of 1839, I entered upon the chaplaincy, I found him literally "a used up man" in almost every sense of the phrase. Every movement was mechanical. He had, for some time, I was told, followed the company he was locked up with, wherever they went, with less display of intelligence than the hunter's dog follows his master.

Almost the first recollections I have of T. are those of seeing him toddling behind the company, as they moved in regular "lock-step" toward the quarry, carrying in a hand-basket the small iron wedges used for splitting rocks. I at once became interested in his case, and by inquiries made of various old keepers, obtained this sketch of his prison life. At my first attempt to converse with him, he manifested much shyness, and preserved, as I then thought, a *stubborn silence;* but afterwards I became convinced that instead of a willful stubbornness being the cause of the silence he observed and the stupidity he manifested, they were the result of the ten years of hard usage and non-communion he had endured,—that having abandoned himself to his stern fate, he had long since lost all hope, fear, or ambition, and hence had become absolutely brutalized.

When, in the Spring of 1840, a change of administration took place, and new and liberal-minded officers were appointed, who appreciated my views, and second-

ed benevolent intercourse with the convicts, I obtained T.'s confidence at once. He was not required to follow his company any more to the quarry, but was left to amuse himself as best he could during the day. I now found easy access to him, and frequently spoke to him of his mother, which seemed to affect him more favorably than any other theme. With all my efforts to arouse him, and wake up the dormant energies of his mind, I failed to elicit anything more from him than such monosyllabic responses as "yes," "no," and occasionally, "I don't know," or some such short phrase; but he was inclined to follow me around the prison yard, and elsewhere as far as he was permitted. He would leave me at the waving of my hand, or come at the beck of my finger, and was in every respect as docile as a lamb. At length the following letter from the District Attorney, containing T.'s pardon, was handed to me by the Principal Keeper, with the request, "Please take charge of this business, for you only can manage it successfully." The letter was addressed to a gentleman residing in the village of Sing Sing, and read as follows:

GEN. A. W.,

MY DEAR SIR:—I have just received the enclosed pardon for T——. Will you do me the favor to take it to the prison and obtain his discharge. I enclose a dollar bill to pay his expenses to this city, where his mother resides. Tell him to call on me at No. 3 N—— St., as soon as he comes here. My interfer-

ence in regard to T. was dictated by charity, and a knowledge of his mother.

Very truly yours,
NEW YORK, Jan. 30th, 1841. WM. H—M—.

From a record of the facts attending T.'s release from the prison, made at the time, I find that this letter was received by me on the morning of February 1st, 1841, two days after it was mailed. As soon as I received the letter with the request of the prison authorities that I would carry out its directions, I hastened to T. and said, "Come, go with me, and I'll take you to your mother." Had he received an electric shock he could not have sprung to his feet more suddenly. Without uttering another word I turned upon my heel, and bent my course toward the dressing room, situated on the opposite side of the prison yard. I knew what the movement would be, and therefore did not even turn my head to look back, but heard his "lock-step" close behind me. Some of the keepers and officers stood by the wayside reviewing the battalion as it passed, not presuming to interfere, knowing that it might cause their downfall; for, notwithstanding T. had become almost idiotic in mind, he was as athletic and strong, physically, as he had ever been, and what with his perfect confidence in his then "commanding officer," and the new hope, however faintly entertained it might have been, of once more seeing his mother, he would, no doubt, have been most furious and combative at the least hindrance.

I was not a little surprised at the stupidity he manifested in changing his prison clothing for citizen dress. The officer who had charge of the clothes room, and myself, were obliged to perform the principal part of the task. The change being effected, I started, without saying a word to him, for my own house, to prepare myself for a trip to the city,—he was at once upon my track. We passed through the great hall, the Agent's office, and by the various guard-houses, in the most perfect silence; but not without exciting the fixed gaze of curiosity from all we passed. His manner of walking, being in every particular like that he had been accustomed to when following his company to the quarry and elsewhere, became the special object of interest. He kept within a pace of me, placing his right foot in the track of my right foot, and his left in the track of my left, without the slightest variation —this being the well-known "lock-step;" and being practised upon his *chaplain* indicated his *mental* condition to the guard and other officers of the prison. After this manner he followed me to my house, to the steamboat, and after we reached the city, which was about twilight in the evening, through various streets, to the District Attorney's dwelling. He spoke but once during the whole time, and that was the single syllable "no," in answer to a question I had put to him. I rang the bell, when we were immediately admitted by the attorney himself. "I have brought T., said I." "I am glad of it," was the reply, and then ad-

dressing himself to T., he said, "You did right in coming directly here. Your mother has given me no peace for years on account of her solicitations to have you pardoned. I therefore wrote in your behalf to Gov. Marcy, but obtained no response. I renewed the application in a letter of my own, and some papers your mother got up, to Gov. Seward, who has been kind enough to grant your release. All this I have done without fee or reward, mostly on your mother's account. Give me your hand." All this was said and done in the dark, and without a single word or movement on the part of the individual addressed and in a way peculiar to the legal profession. A bright thought must have suddenly suggested itself to the speaker, originating, doubtless, in the silence observed by T.; for he ceased speaking abruptly, ran off for a lamp, and returning without delay, commenced a survey of T. from head to foot. Poor T. was gazing most vacantly on the floor. Mr. M. spoke to him at first rather tenderly—but no reply; then in a commanding and severe tone, but with no better success. T. was as unmoved by the one form or manner of address as the other. There he stood, ready to move when I moved, and to follow where I led; but not till then. "Take him away, for I shall have nothing to do with him," said the attorney. "My dear sir," I replied, "please read this letter," handing him his own letter, containing directions that T. should come directly to his house. "Yes," he

rejoined, "I did so direct ; but I did not then know that he had had his brains knocked out at the prison." I felt the force of this implication most keenly, but managed not to betray such a degree of sympathy with the sentiment as would neutralize or weaken my claim upon him for aid in extricating me from present difficulty. He then proposed, if I would find lodging for T. that night, he would assist me in the morning in searching for his mother, as he was ignorant of her address, or send him to the Alms-house until she could be found.

There was no place, under the circumstances, where I felt myself at any liberty to solicit for him shelter for the night, but the house of my brother, Dr. Samuel Luckey. Thither we went in usual file. My brother was at once interested in T., and has not yet forgotten the subsequent events of my connection with that unfortunate man. When supper was prepared for T., I motioned him to the table, and then turning away from him, re-commenced my conversation with the family, forgetful alike of T.'s imbecility, and the fact that he had used neither knife nor fork for more than eleven years. About fifteen minutes after I had seated T. at the table, opposite his plate filled with "food convenient for him," my niece directed my attention to the fact that he had not moved a hand towards helping himself : this was the more strange, as he had not tasted food that day. I immediately went to him and putting his hands on his knife and fork, said

"Now take hold and eat all you wish." He lost no time after that, until his plate was twice emptied.

To allay any fears my brother's family might entertain from having a *discharged convict* under their roof, I requested that a bed should be prepared for T. in the same room with my own. At an early hour, I conducted him to his bed, and assisted in undressing him. After he had lain down, for the purpose of adjusting his pillow, I caused him to raise his head, placing the pillow in a more comfortable position, and then, without a thought that it was necessary to bid him lay his head down again, I turned away to rejoin the family below—saying, as I went out, "I will return in a few minutes." I remained away, however, a full hour. When I regained my bedroom door, I paused to listen; and, hearing hard breathing and suppressed groans, I hurried in and beheld the poor fellow in the same uncomfortable position in which I had left him—his head and shoulders raised half perpendicularly, and he panting with pain and fatigue. "T.," said I, "don't you know enough to lay down your head?" at the same time putting my hand gently upon his forehead. He smiled, and, dropping his head upon the pillow, was sound asleep in five minutes.

The next morning, accompanied by my brother, we returned to the District Attorney's office, who, not having ascertained the place where T.'s mother resided, prepared to go with us to the Mayor's office.

I led the van to the street, and then, feeling a little mischievous, fell in the rear unnoticed by my brother and the attorney. T., as I knew he would, fell back with me. "Come on, my boy," cried the attorney, not looking to the right or left until he and my brother had reached the next block, when, turning around and seeing neither T. nor myself, they came back; and the attorney, with not a little sternness, commanded T. to follow him, and again started to lead, but with no better success. When they returned again the second time, seeing the attention of all the passers-by was being drawn towards us, I quietly said, "Mr. Attorney, if you will let T. and myself take the lead, there will be no more trouble in this case." He indicated his assent, and off we started in old style, greeted with peals of laughter on every side as we threaded our way through the crowded streets.

The "lock-step" was so novel to the spectators, and it was so emphatically practised on that occasion, that even my companions failed to retain their usual gravity. At the Mayor's office, T. looked to me for direction in all his motions, and again at the Tombs, where we were obliged to go for the necessary papers admitting him to the Alms-house until his mother could be found.

At the Tombs, we procured from the sitting magistrate an order for T.'s admission to the Alms-house for an indefinite period; but, as the wagon that con-

veyed the poor thither would not go again until the next day, directions were given to put T. in a cell on the ground-floor, and to furnish him with food and other necessaries. All this time, T. stood as usual about one pace in the rear of his guide. "Come, boy," said a stout, rough-voiced official, "follow me." There was, of course, no compliance—not even the slightest movement of a muscle. This "contempt of court" was not to be lightly passed over; and hence the offended dignitary stepped up to T., showing his mace in too menacing a manner for even an idiot to admire. T. immediately squared off for fight. Believing the joke had been carried far enough, I started for the steps leading to the prison yard, and T. as instantly followed, leaving the officials to endure their transition from frowns to smiles as best they could, and the attorney and my brother to explain and arrange matters. This being done, before we had reached the cell, two officers overtook us for the purpose of closing in before the door of the cell, into which I was to lead my trusting follower, and then suddenly back out. All this was promptly accomplished; but I had not yet left the door half a dozen paces behind, until I found T. in his old position. The instant the officers had closed in between us, he gave one bound for freedom, and, knocking down both the officers, he was again taking the "lock-step" *to see his mother*. The officers, recovering themselves, seized him unawares, and lifting him as they would I

child, carried him back to the cell. Finding he must submit, he commenced to cry and sob as if he were a child; and the last I heard of his wailings were alternate appeals to "mother and Luckey." While others, whom I passed in silence, were making themselves merry over this scene, I felt my heart grow sick with sadness in view of the heart-rendings of a fond mother when the overwhelming truth should burst upon her, that the son with whom she had parted twelve years before, sound in body and mind, whom she had not seen in the interim, and from whom she had not so much as heard, was now returned to her broken and crushed in intellect by the severity of the treatment to which he had been subjected.

About ten days subsequent to these events, I received a note (now before me) from T.'s mother, stating that letters and other necessary documents, praying for T.'s pardon, had been sent to Gov. Seward; and that she considered it strange he had not been liberated long before, evidently showing she was ignorant of what had been done. She happened, however, to send her address, when I immediately replied, informing her where she might find her son, and the reasons for placing him there.

From the instant T. regained the society, sympathy, and home of his mother, he began rapidly to improve both in mind and manners. When I last heard from him, ten years since, he had become quite efficient

in aiding to support and comfort his infirm and heart-broken mother.

Another case not only of mental disorder, but also of physical disability, brought about by the severity of the old system of discipline, is that of O. P., who was convicted of arson in the second degree and sentenced to the prison at Sing Sing, by Judge Ruggles, on the 23d of January, 1836, for the term of fifteen years.

When O. entered the prison he was a healthy, and strong man; but of an impulsive and passionate disposition, and greatly given to talking. He consequently subjected himself to frequent severe punishments, and in about three years after his admission, both mind and body failed. The officers said he became *paralytic*, and was thenceforth left to shift for himself. It was just after this breaking up of his faculties that I became connected with the prison. I found O. in a much more helpless and hopeless condition than T. He could not move without a crutch under each arm to support him; nor did I ever hear him utter a distinct word during the twenty-two months he remained in the prison after my arrival. Whenever he became excited he made great efforts to talk, which only resulted in a most hideous monkey chattering. I distinctly remember his once coming to me in the greatest possible excitement, flourishing one of his crutches, chattering, and pointing in the direction of a certain workshop; but with all my skill in under-

standing signs and gibberish, I failed to interpret his meaning. I dismissed him for the time, but set about the task of finding out, if possible, the cause of his excitement. I began as usual by making inquiry of the old keepers respecting his conduct and condition previous to my personal knowledge of him, and elicited in substance the foregoing statement respecting his health, disposition and treatment. I was further informed, that when he could speak he had been frequently heard to assert his innocence of the crime for which he had been sent to the prison, and intimating his knowledge of the guilty person. Now, I thought, I have a clue to the mystery involved in his unwonted manifestation of feeling, and which may eventually lead to its solution. I therefore carelessly asked, Do either of you know whether any new convicts have been brought here lately, and if so, are any of them in —— shop? "Yes," was the reply, "there were several convicts received here last week, and one or two of them are in that shop." I immediately went to one of the superior officers and informed him of the matter. We went together into the hospital, when I said to O., Come, go with us, and point out the man that you think is guilty instead of you. I never witnessed a countenance more suddenly lit up with joy than was his on that occasion. He seized his crutches, rolled off his cot, hobbled down stairs, in less time than I have been recording his actions, and away he went across the yard directly for the shop referred to.

Although we closely followed him, he would occasionally turn around, jabber away at us, and flourish his crutch by way of hurrying us up. He rushed into the shop and ran right up to one of the new convicts, thrust his crutch at him as eagerly as if about to run him through the body, and turning to us, spluttered more indistinctly and hideously than ever. The whole shop stood aghast, while the poor stranger blushed deeply and looked the picture of guilt. I whispered to the officer who accompanied me, It is enough for the present; I would call O. away. He did so, and we returned with him to the hospital, assuring him that a further investigation of his case should be made.

Within a week or two after this occurrence I went to the cell of the new comer, and inquired of him if he knew the cause of O.'s conduct, and what was the reason of his own agitation at the time? "Yes, sir," was the reply, "I think I know, in part at least, something of the reason why that poor fellow is so restless and ill-natured under his confinement, and that is, the fact that he is comparatively guiltless of the crime with which he was charged. I can safely say, he is not guilty of that particular crime." He seemed unwilling to say any more, and therefore I did not press him. We wrote to Governor Seward the particulars of his case, and received his pardon by the return of mail.

I had written to O's brother some time previously, and had received a sympathizing reply, together with

his address, which was about one hundred miles up the country. I now wrote again desiring his brother to come for him to my house immediately; but after keeping O. a week or more at my residence, and receiving no intelligence from his brother he became exceedingly restless, and was continually pointing in the direction where his brother lived. I therefore supplied myself with a card about six inches square, wrote on it his name, where he desired to go, and some suitable directions for the captain of the steamboat, and the stage driver, hung the card around his neck, took him to the boat, and placing him on board, bade him adieu, and have neither seen nor heard from him since.

CHAPTER IX.

THE APPRENTICE.

Skillful Workman—Faithful Son—The Temptation—Fatal Step—Imprisonment—Contrition—Reformation—Vow fulfilled.

"WATCH and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." The influence of association upon the human mind is mysterious and powerful. Frequently, by its connecting links, joy and grief, pleasure and pain, are alternately excited. It sometimes, indeed, so commingles and amalgamates conflicting emotions, that evident tokens of each can be distinctly traced on the same countenance at the same time. This principle of moral science finds an illustration in the following fact. I have in my possession three large volumes, which, in my estimation, are second to none but the inspired volume. They were presented to me for a purpose the most pleasing; and yet, on account of the mournful event connected with the history of the donor, I can never look upon them, but with painful emotions.

A majority of the convicts in Sing Sing Prison are sent from New York and Brooklyn; and, of course,

many of their friends and relatives reside in those cities. On ascertaining this fact, an immense missionary field opened before me, and I at once felt deeply impressed with the conviction that it was my bounden duty to occupy it. Hence, very soon after I entered upon my duties as Chaplain, I commenced, at their request, visiting the families and friends of convicts residing in those cities. These visits I continued to pay monthly and semi-monthly, until I left the prison. Coming to them on such occasions as a sympathizing friend, intrusted with the *secrets* of domestic grief and misery, and clothed with *official* sanctions, I was uniformly received with a hearty welcome, and generally invited to pray with them before I left. Thus, in the hovel and in the parlor, in the cellar and in the garret, and even in the low grog-shop, have I knelt in prayer with this unfortunate class of our fellow-beings; and seldom, on such occasions, did we leave the mercy-seat without witnessing more or less of the subduing influence of grace. Returning to the convicts interested, and relating to them the result of my visits, their moral feelings would, in most instances, be similarly affected. On one fine summer's morning, when, in company with my wife, I was passing through the city of New York for the purpose of paying visits of this kind, our attention was arrested by a pious gentleman, with whom I had formerly been acquainted. He inquired if I knew a prisoner of the name of B. I replied in the affirmative, assuring him,

at the same time, that he was a young man whose modest, unassuming, and upright conduct had won the confidence of the officers of the prison. Having heard my reply, he pressed us to accompany him to his own house, for the purpose of giving us a brief history of that unfortunate youth. After introducing us to his wife, who seemed as deeply interested in the young man's welfare as her husband, he gave, as near as I can recollect, the following statement:—

"When I resided in the village of N——, my trade, as you may recollect, was prosperous, and my circumstances favorable. On a cold and inclement day, a lad called at my shop and desired me to employ him. He had the appearance of a bright, intelligent, and well-trained boy. The simple statement he made respecting himself and his family circumstances, much affected me. It appeared, from his remarks, that his father had been an industrious and worthy man; that after having lingered long with a pulmonary consumption, he had died, leaving his infirm mother, a weakly sister, and himself in embarrassed circumstances; and that his chief desire was to procure a situation that would enable him to relieve the present necessities of his dependent mother and sister. The big tears that stole down the little fellow's cheeks, as he spoke severally of his father, his mother, and his sister, won my confidence. I accompanied him home, and found he had told me the truth. Duty was too plain for me to hesitate any longer. He became my

apprentice; and in order to sanction and encourage his affectionate regard for his mother and sister, I agreed to allow him small wages from the beginning. A more steady, faithful, and ingenious apprentice I never had, and indeed never knew. In a very short time he had so far advanced in his trade as to be able to add considerably to his small allowance, by overwork. I have frequently said to my wife, "That boy lacks but one thing to make him *just right*, and that is, experimental religion." His apprenticeship expired; still he remained with us, and probably would have continued with us to this time, had we not been compelled to give up business. In fact, having no children of our own, we regarded him more in the character of a son than of an apprentice; and even now, although he is clad in the garb of a prisoner, we look upon him as an affectionate son, who, in an unguarded moment, took *one* false and wicked step. The external circumstances attending this fatal error, and which presented the temptation to it, are the following: Being under the necessity of leaving me, he sought, but sought in vain, to find employment that would enable him to sustain his mother and sister as he had done. Disappointment attending every effort, he rashly determined to employ what little property he had procured in establishing a business for himself. He did so, and applied himself to his business with increased energy. This was in the midst of the great money panic. He was unaccustomed to the financial

department of business, and being a stranger, he had no friends with whom to counsel, and had but little success in his enterprise; yet his prospects he thought sufficiently encouraging to warrant a strong hope for the future. The first quarter's rent being nearly due, he found that he would lack some fifty dollars of the payment. As this was the first quarter, the payment must be promptly met or his business must go down, and those dependent upon it must be left to suffer. "My mother, my poor afflicted mother, what will become of her if I do not succeed in meeting this claim!" was his constant soliloquy. Not being prepared, by a firm belief in the providence of God, successfully to encounter the phrensy which such forebodings would naturally produce, he at this moment of desperation, forged a fifty-dollar note. This act, however, was done in full confidence that he should be able to redeem it at or before its maturity. In this, as is usually the case with forgers, he was disappointed; for, instead of having an opportunity to redeem the note, the forgery was detected, he was arrested on suspicion, confessed his guilt, and was locked up in a criminal's cell. Had he informed me of his embarrassed condition, I would have done all I could to relieve him; but through pride, or a desire not to distress us, he gave no intimation of it, either to his mother or myself, till all was past. His trial came on soon after he was arrested, at which he pleaded guilty to his indictment, and told his simple

tale with so much apparent ingenuousness, that the jury were induced to recommend him to mercy, and the court sentenced him for the shortest term the law would admit. The sheriff informed me that on leaving the court room, and while on their way to Sing Sing, the prisoner appeared to have lost all consciousness of his own destiny, in the contemplation of a subject superior in its claims; but what that subject was, no one seemed to know. It, however, was soon explained; for, after the prisoner was lodged in his solitary cell, and the sheriff had bid him adieu, and, as the prisoner supposed, had left the premises, the sad soliloquy was again heard: 'My mother, O my dear, *dear* mother! what will become of you and my sister, now that your erring son and brother is disgraced and confined.'

"When this painful news reached me, I determined to remove to the city. My chief object for so doing was to procure a situation, which would enable me to render some assistance to his worthy mother and sister during his confinement. The information I received from you this morning is the first I have obtained since he has been there. I have been thus minute in giving his history, that your intercourse with him may be governed by the facts of the case." And then, associating his wife, who sat by, weeping with himself, he added, "Will you, for our sakes, as well as for the sake of his deeply afflicted mother and sister, deal gently and kindly with him, and strive to lead him into

the way of life. Tell him that his mother and sister are provided for; that he is remembered at a throne of grace; and that our earnest desire is, that this act will teach him the folly and danger of 'doing evil that good may come'; and that his present humiliating condition will lead him so to repent of his sins, and to believe in God, as to prevent such a distrust in his providence as to betray him again into a criminal act."

After uniting with this truly kind and benevolent family in addressing a throne of heavenly grace in behalf of this unwary youth, we returned to Sing Sing, under a deep sense of increased responsibility. I had often noticed the peculiarly serious and downcast look of this convict, and that he had no intercourse with his fellow prisoners; but was ignorant of the cause, until I learned his history from his friend. The next Sabbath found me at the door of his cell. He, as usual appeared glad to see me, but manifested no inclination for conversation. Being careful to introduce my message in a proper way, I inquired, in rather a careless manner, if he was acquainted with Mr. C——. In a moment flashes of excitement covered his face, and tears filled his eyes. After a moment's pause, he replied, "Yes, sir, I am well acquainted with that good man; and let me say to you, that all I am, and the preservation from suffering and want of all I hold dear on earth, I owe, under God, to the Christian benevolence of that man and his excellent wife." I then briefly related to him the circumstances of our visit to

the family, and communicated to him the message of his friend. When I came to that part of it which assured him that his mother and sister were provided for, he sobbed aloud, and retiring to the back part of his cell, he covered his face with his hands and leaned his head against the wall. Seeing him so deeply affected, I thought it improper to prolong my visit; consequently, with feelings of inexpressible sympathy and solicitude, I left him alone with his God, and passed on to other cells. On the succeeding Sabbath I found the number of his cell to be, for the first time, among those whose occupants had requested their several keepers to invite me to visit them. I need not say that his cell was among the first that I visited on that memorable day. "You will have the goodness, I hope," he said, "to overlook and forgive the abrupt manner in which I left you last Sunday. My heart was so filled with self-reproach that I scarcely knew what I did. I now see, or think I see, the foundation of all my misery—the great error of my life; the sin of unbelief—a distrust, as my friend terms it, in the providence of God. How ungrateful, how exceedingly wicked, to trust to the wisdom of my own depraved heart to provide for my mother, instead of relying upon the wisdom and goodness of the 'widow's God.' In calling to mind the past, I am convinced that while I was congratulating myself on account of my moral and social integrity, God was not in all my thoughts. This disgrace and affliction has been permitted, in

mercy, to come upon me, to remove my spiritual blindness and soften my hard heart. It is all right. I *feel* that it is all right. And now may I ask you the loan of a few religious books." The request was promptly met; so likewise was the request of his friend, that I should pay special attention to his case. His countenance from this time began to assume a more cheerful aspect; and although he still continued to observe his rule of absolute non-intercourse with his fellow-prisoners, and reservedness towards the officers, he frequently sought opportunities to converse with me, and always wished to talk on religious subjects. He had but a few months to stay when this occurred, during which time I never saw or heard of any act of his incompatible with a Christian's life. On leaving the Prison, he found that his friend had not only assisted his mother and sister to sustain themselves during his imprisonment, but had procured in a secluded part of a neighboring city, a situation congenial with his sensitive feelings, and sufficiently lucrative to yield an humble support for himself and those he so much loved. Although I frequently heard of his welfare, two years rolled away after his release before I saw him. On a pleasant day, as I was walking upon the promenade deck of a steamboat, a familiar face passed me. I stepped into the first nook that would screen me from the gaze of the crowd, and in a moment the familiar face was before me. It proved to be none other than that of the subject of this sketch. He said he had a

little shop of his own in the city of L——; that his mother and sister were with him, and that he *now* enjoyed, as in former times, the pleasures and privileges of social life, and, in addition to these, the consolations of religion. He then spoke, with much apparent emotion, of the benefit and comfort he had derived from the books I had loaned him; and said, "I made a solemn promise, while reading those books in my gloomy cell, that if my Maker would forgive my sins and spare my life, I would, at the first opportunity that occurred, present you with a thank-offering, for the purpose of enabling you to do to others as you did to me." I informed him that we had succeeded in obtaining a prison library. "I heard so," he replied; "but my promise is binding upon me; and besides, I am too well acquainted with the feelings of a prisoner not to know that he would read a book from your library with much more interest and profit than one from the State Library. I beg you, therefore, to accept this mite, and observe the following rule in its appropriation. First, procure decidedly religious books; secondly, loan them to none but such of the convicts as, in your judgment, will make a good use of them; and, thirdly, retain them in your own library as a perpetual memento of a redeemed prisoner." These directions were faithfully carried out on my part, and the observance of the last direction forms the *pleasingly painful* association referred to in the commencement of this narrative.

It is now fifteen years since that young man left Sing Sing Prison, and he has uniformly proved himself to be, indeed, a "redeemed convict." Let the youth of our happy land learn from his experience the vast importance, even in view of present enjoyment, of seeking *first* the kingdom of God and his righteous ness." Then will they be able at all times to "trust in the Lord, and do good," and to "watch and pray that they enter not into temptation."

CHAPTER X.

STORIES OF TWO BOYS.

Poor S——. Unfortunate business connections—Restraints of former years suddenly swept away—In prison—Precipitant trials—Public press—Reporters—The iron rule—The Pastor's letter—Monomania.

Poor S—— was from Massachusetts, where in early life he taught school, and sustained a fair reputation. At an early age, under the religious training of his pious mother, he became serious, and when he grew up was proposed for membership in the church. He married a most excellent woman with whom he might have lived happily in the possession of comfort at home, and the respect and esteem of his neighbors. When he was about thirty-four years of age, a desire for more active and lucrative employment induced him to embark in the lumber business, much against the wishes of his wife, children, and aged parents. Here his associates were the rough and half-civilized characters usually found among raftsmen in a lumber country. His business frequently led him to the city of New-York, and in the company of these men, and the society they naturally fell into during their visits to the city, the religious influence of his calmer days lost its hold upon him, and he became an easy prey to the emissaries of wickedness.

About the beginning of the year 1838, his business led him to the city of New-York. He there fell into the company of one of those prowlers, who make it their business to entice the unwary into vicious associations and practices. His companion treated him freely to intoxicating drink, and, according to his own account, brought him to a house that he said was his residence, but which proved to be a den of infamy. Having fallen thus far, almost unwittingly, and being amongst entire strangers, the restraints of former years were suddenly swept away, and he was borne down the resistless tide of iniquity with the impetuosity which often distinguishes the course of those who deliberately throw aside the instructions of earlier years. His downward career was suddenly checked by his arrest on a charge of passing counterfeit money. Whether or not he was guilty he was forced to submit entirely to the decision of a jury. For himself, he knew nothing about it: he neither denied nor admitted the charge. On the trial of the case he was convicted of forgery in the second degree, and sentenced by Judge Riker on the 20th of February, 1838, to the Sing Sing State Prison, for the term of five years and six months.

When the day of trial arrived his friends were at a distance, entirely ignorant of the circumstances in which he was placed, and of course, not available to prove his former good character. Accordingly the charge of being one of a gang of well-trained coun-

terfeiters,—perhaps the leader,—had its full force in his conviction and sentence. In many cases which have come under my observation, in which the accused has been brought to trial under similar circumstances to those of S., I cannot but regard the precipitate manner in which such prosecutions are conducted as highly injudicious and oppressive. The defendant is not allowed sufficient time to prepare himself for the trial, the result of which is to either set him again at liberty, or consign him for many years to a felon's cell. Much of the evil in these cases is chargeable to the public press. As soon as it is known that an arrest has been made, if the offence is of a higher grade than is dealt with in the petty courts, the reporters for the press too frequently indulge in a license not warranted by facts. The imagination is drawn upon to an extent which becomes highly prejudicial, and oftentimes fixes an unfavorable impression on the minds of the prosecuting attorney and judge, of which they are unable wholly to divest themselves. The severe judgments which are usually passed upon men under such circumstances are not unfrequently urged as the reason why executive clemency should be extended to the convict. Were it not for the exercise of the pardoning power in numerous instances of this nature hopeless despondency would be the result, and the punishment inflicted would in this way become wholly disproportionate to the offences. The saving and beneficent influence of this power, as exercised in behalf of

"poor S.," manifested itself in a manner peculiarly gratifying to the advocates of a "judicious exercise of the prerogative."

When the enlightened administration of 1840 had broken asunder the restraints of the "iron rule," I learned from S. that he had, when arrested, a father, mother, wife, two daughters, and many other friends residing in Massachusetts, none of whom he had seen or heard from for two or three years; and he supposed they regarded him as dead. I perceived that these thoughts had so preyed upon his mind as to present the symptoms of monomania. I mentioned this to the agent, Mr. Seymour, who entertained the same opinion, and united with me in urging S. to write to his friends, and so open a correspondence with them. To this he objected, under the impression that they were ignorant of the disgrace which he had brought upon himself, and that it was his duty to maintain silence, and so save them the pain which a knowledge of the facts would necessarily occasion. While S. was hesitating on this point, I received the following letter from the pastor of the church to which his family belonged, conveying to his mind the astounding intelligence that they were not ignorant of his degradation.

——, ——, May 18, 1840.

To the Chaplain of the Sing Sing State Prison:

Rev. and Dear Sir:—I am requested by Mrs. S——, a widow lady in this place, to write you, although an entire stranger, and make certain enquiries respect-

ing her son, Mr. —— — S——, who is an inmate of the prison at Sing Sing. Mrs. S. wishes to know whether her son enjoys good health; but more especially how he behaves himself in his confinement, and whether he exhibits any signs of *penitence* for his past life and misconduct?

He was once considered a respectable and worthy man, and was a member of the Christian Church. He has a virtuous and Christian wife, and two excellent daughters, who are in an adjoining town, in deep affliction on account of the misfortunes and disgrace of the family, caused by the misconduct of the father and husband. They would also be exceedingly gratified to hear from Mr. S.

If you, dear sir, will address a letter to Rev. J. D. Bridge, D—— M——, answering the inquiries contained in this letter, and making such other communications as you deem proper, you will confer a great favor on a worthy circle of deeply afflicted friends.

Respectfully yours,

J. D. Bridge,

Pastor of the M. E. Church, D—— M——.

P. S. The aged father of Mr. S. has lately deceased.

To this letter I immediately replied, and thus a correspondence was opened with his family and friends which continued for nearly two years, when he was pardoned by Gov. Seward. For some time previous to his release he was affected by an aberration of intellect, which was more visibly manifested on religious matters. On one occasion he ceased work and went to his cell. He sent for me with the request that I would come and baptize him. As I approached he

remarked to me, "The day of pentecost is fully come, and I have been baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire;—what hinders that I should be baptized with water?" A few months subsequent to his release, I received a letter written by his own hand, from which the following extract is taken:

"These lines will inform you that I am at present in tolerable good health, though I have suffered much since I saw you. I should have written long before this, but have been prevented by the unsettled state of affairs connected with me and my family. I have, however, through the mercy of God, recovered my senses, and am enabled to glorify God. The mission my God gave me to reveal is complete;—the old serpent, the Devil, is dead, his reign on earth, his influence over the hearts of men, is finished; the day so long desired by all God's children is now accomplished, and I, even I, through my God, have been the willing instrument in effecting it. If you wish to know anything more concerning my behavior,—if you or anybody else think that I have betrayed my trust, or hesitated to do all I thought to be right, you may write to the Hon. S—— S——, or wait till you get to heaven for the information."

From this extract it will be seen that his mind was still wandering; but after a few months' longer intercourse with his family and society in general, all traces of this state of mind seem to have left him. Towards the close of 1842, I received another letter from him, of which the following in an extract:

"I received yours of the 14th this day, and am rejoiced to hear from you, and that you are trampling

under foot what you deem to be the works of Satan. May God strengthen you to keep travelling in your good old way. I am, indeed, sorry to hear that L. is dead. I should have informed his friends where he was, had he not strictly enjoined silence upon me, and now, perhaps, it would be better not to do so. I am at present teaching school, and expect to continue in the employment during the winter. The God in whom I trust keeps me in his Almighty hand,—nothing can hurt me. I rejoice in perfect love, having gotten the victory over death, hell, and the grave, and live in full assurance of love and union with God on earth, and an eternity of happiness in heaven."

From all I saw of S. while in prison, and what I heard of him subsequently to his release by pardon, I consider his case a fair example of the beneficial results of a merciful and discreet prison discipline, and of a judicious exercise of the "pardoning power."

CHAPTER XI.

NARRATIVE OF L. H——.

L. H——.—Early promise—Contaminating influences—Convicted of forgery—Superior to other convicts—Restraints upon Chaplain—Pious mother—Prodigal son—Family visits—An invalid—Not guilty—Pardon—Sickness—Dies at home.

L. H——, the subject of the following narrative, was born on Long Island, in the year 1801. He was the only son of respectable parents, whose circumstances in life afforded the necessary means to give their children—one son and two daughters—a good but plain education. When he had arrived at the proper age he was apprenticed to a machinist in the city of New-York. As the term of his apprenticeship was drawing to a close, his father died, leaving to him the filial duty of providing for his aged, infirm, but well-beloved mother. His sisters, also, looked to him for protection and aid. The duties of a good son and tender and affectionate brother, were promptly and cheerfully discharged, and the expectations of his mother and sisters appeared, in their view, to be fully met. He rented a house in the city and removed his family from Long Island. His sisters were married to respectable

tradesmen; and when I made their acquaintance in 1841, they were in good circumstances. Every member of the family manifested a kind and affectionate disposition. His mother had long enjoyed the esteem and confidence of the church, as a deeply pious woman. From his childhood, as he repeatedly informed me, he was trained up in the way he should go. By the death of his father he was deprived of the firm discipline he was wont to exercise, at the time it was most needed. From various causes he was greatly exposed to the contaminating influences that usually cluster around a thrifty young man in large cities. These influences more than counter-balanced his mother's faithful training, and led him into such associations as excited the suspicions of the police that he aided and abetted in passing counterfeit money. He was at length arrested in the act, convicted of forgery in the second degree, and sentenced by Judge Riker, on the 15th of July, 1837, to ten years hard labor in the Sing Sing State Prison. He was then thirty-six years of age, in the prime of life, and in the possession of good health.

When I first saw L. H., which was in 1839, he attracted my special attention as being superior to the convicts around him, in his manly and dignified bearing, intellectual countenance, and serious deportment. I soon discovered that from some cause his health was being gradually undermined, and if some effectual remedies were not applied, he would ere long fill a premature grave. It might have been the result of

his cultivated sensitiveness, reminiscences of past enjoyments, contrition of heart, a sense of personal injustice, or, perhaps, all combined ; but whatever it was, I felt a peculiar desire to have a free and general conversation with him. The rules of the prison, at that time, however, forbade it, as they particularly specified, "It is the duty of the Chaplain, in all cases, and under all circumstances, to conform strictly to the rules and regulations of the Prison. He is to furnish the convicts with no intelligence other than what his profession requires." This rule, with the interpretation of it by the authorities of the institution, during the early period of my Chaplaincy, cut me off from that unrestrained intercourse with the convicts which has always appeared to me highly necessary to the accomplishment of my mission amongst them.

At the commencement of the new administration in 1840, the above rule was abrogated, and at the earliest practicable moment I availed myself of the liberty it conferred, by hastening to L. H. and opening a conversation with him, respecting himself, his friends, and other matters of personal or family interest. I found him as to intellect, correct training, and moral feeling, all I had anticipated. Sadness and despondency marked every word and feature. He was evidently on the decline. "Have you any friends in the city on whom I could call in your behalf?" I inquired. I shall never forget the sudden and complete transformation of countenance manifested as he replied, "Can it be

possible that I shall once more hear from my own dear mother and sisters before I die? Oh, I *thank* you and Mr. Seymour for all this. Yes, sir; I *have* friends in the city—a pious mother, who, if living, ceases not to pray for her only, her prodigal, son, and also, two married sisters. If you would only call upon them, and tell them how I am, and let me know in return how they are, you would confer upon me the greatest conceivable favor." I did so, and by that means succeeded in establishing a direct and profitable intercourse with the better feelings of his heart.

At each successive visit to the quiet and comfortable homes of his sisters, I became increasingly interested in the family. In the meantime his mother died; but I deemed it imprudent, in view of his health, and the effects on his mind, to tell him of it. L. H. was at this time an invalid at the hospital. Mr. W. P., who was hospital keeper, said to me, a day or two after L. H. had been sent to the hospital, "I never was more surprised in my life than I was to see that man in this place. I have known him, and his most excellent family for many years; and a more industrious, upright, and respectable tradesman than I conceived him to be, is seldom found. It strikes me that there must have been something wrong connected with the finding of his indictment. I wish you would investigate the affair, Mr. Luckey." This voluntary statement of Mr. P. being in such strict conformity with the statements which his mother and sisters had fre-

quently made to me, I cheerfully complied with the request. I commenced with L. H. himself, by inviting his confidence, and requesting such a statement of his difficulties as he would be willing to meet at the bar of God. He at first hesitated. "Convicts," he said, "will not be believed, unless they detail such a career of guilt and crime as Heaven knows I was never guilty of." He at length complied with my request and stated substantially as follows.

Up to the period of his arrest he had been outwardly moral; but at the same time a rebel against God. His evil nature led him to neglect the counsel of his mother, and consequently, as he was fond of society, to seek the companionship and counsel of the ungodly. In such society, although his mother and sisters knew it not, he acquired an appetite for intoxicating drinks. In the indulgence of this appetite he was brought into acquaintance with some who proved to be improper associates for an honest man. This course made it sometimes difficult for him to meet his money engagements. On one of these occasions, while in company with some of these persons at a liquor saloon, the bill he offered in payment was pronounced by the landlord, "doubtful." L. H. replied, "I cannot recollect where I got it, but I cannot very well bear the loss of its amount, at present; I will go to another place and get it changed." The fact was, as he told me himself, that five-dollar note was all he had, and he needed the change to procure necessary provisions for his

home. He assured me, that notwithstanding the criminal neglect of his mother's religious admonitions and counsel, he loved her most ardently, and would much rather suffer want and distress himself, than that she should feel their slightest pangs by reason of his neglect. He did not believe the note to be bad, and, therefore went immediately to another drinking place to get it changed. He was followed by the proprietor of the saloon he had just left, and a police officer, who arrested him when he presented the bill a second time in payment. His associates he never saw or heard of afterward, except at his trial, when they were spoken of as belonging to a band of counterfeiters. Of the truth or falsity of this statement he had no knowledge; but the fact of being found in their company, and drinking with them, had much to do with his conviction and long sentence. His lawyer assured him that he need have no apprehensions as to the result of his trial, and being exceedingly sensitive respecting the unstained character of his beloved family and friends, he determined to be tried under a fictitious name, in the hope that his family would know nothing about the affair. In his delusion he deprived himself of the important advantage his friends would have afforded by their testimony in reference to his character.

But, as he said himself, "the time had come for the visitation of God's righteous judgments upon me for my 'secret faults.' I was tried and sentenced in a

most summary manner, and for the last three years have suffered unmitigated mental torture, under which my physical strength has rapidly declined; but since, through the kindness of Mr. Seymour and yourself, a means of communication has been opened between my beloved sisters and myself, and the 'true light' hath shined upon my dark and rebellious heart, I am reconciled to my lot. Mr. Luckey, will you promise to pray for me, that God, for Christ's sake, will forgive my many and heinous sins, and fit me for heaven and my sainted mother's society?—then, indeed, would I rejoice to die."

On comparing notes with Mr. Seymour, I ascertained that he was aware of the above facts: we, therefore, transmitted a history of the case to the Governor, by the sisters of L. H., who returned with his pardon and brought him to their home.

I cannot even draw the outline, much less fill up the picture of the scene which passed before us in the hospital, when these sisters met their only,—their long lost,—their dying brother, with his pardon in their hands. I cannot describe it: my reader's imagination must fancy the whole.

L. H. lived but a few weeks after his release. I visited him two or three times before his decease, and found his beloved friends devoted in their efforts to smooth his passage to that peaceful shore, where—

> "Sickness and sorrow, pain and death,
> Are felt and feared no more."

He died as the Christian dies,—in peace with God and man. He laid aside his mortality in hope of a glorious resurrection to eternal life.

His appreciation of the kindness shown him by the Governor, in granting his pardon, and by the officers of the prison in their efforts to ameliorate his condition is manifested by the annexed letter to myself from one of his sisters :

NEW YORK, August 15, 1842.

DEAR SIR :

We only removed our unfortunate brother home in time to die. He was pardoned, as you know, on the 22d day of May, and died on the 27th of June. He expressed great anxiety to see you and Mr. Seymour, and spoke of your kindness and patience in explaining the mysteries of the Bible, and removing the darkness from his eyes, by which he was enabled to look forward to a brighter and better world. He prayed that he might be spared to make some small returns to his dear sisters for all the sorrow he had occasioned them. He regretted that he had lived to so little purpose, and begged of me to pray in my family night and morning. A few days previous to his death he said he would like to converse with you. I sent for your friend, Mr. Van Dusen, but my brother was unable to hold any considerable conversation. With much difficulty he said, "I am a great sinner!" He made many attempts to kneel and pray ; but was in such agony he could not. He requested me to read the "Dairyman's Daughter." I did so, and he whispered, "How good!" From that time he lay insensible until his death, three days afterward. They were the longest days I ever saw. I prayed to see him die. We buried

him, in accordance with his request, beside our mother at Cold-Spring. It was a comfort to me to close his eyes, and lay his weary frame beside her. If you think it would afford His Excellency, the Governor, any satisfaction to learn that my brother was not ungrateful, nor unworthy the clemency bestowed upon him, have the kindness to apprise him of these facts, and of his death. Never shall I forget the gratitude I owe his Excellency for restoring to his home, and our arms, my only brother. May he be honored on earth and happy in heaven!

With much respect for yourself and Mr. Seymour,
I remain yours truly,
C—— S——.

Rev. John Luckey.

A day or two after receiving the above letter, I transmitted it, together with one from myself, to the Governor. During the ensuing month I received the following in reply:

Albany, September 25, 1842.

Dear Sir:

Among the communications which accumulated on my table, during an absence of several days from this city, was your letter of the 20th of August, which gave me information concerning the death of L. H., a convict, whom I had then recently pardoned; and also interesting details concerning the lives and characters of some others, who had been recipients of Executive clemency. Be pleased to make known to Mrs. S. and Mrs. I. my grateful acknowledgements of their kind recollections of me, and my sympathy with them in both the sorrow and the joy they must have felt in closing the eyes of their convicted but restored,—erring, but reclaimed, brother.

You will, my dear sir, do a great public service, if you will keep a record of the cases of reform of persons discharged from prison, as well as of those upon whom mercy as well as punishment produce no effect. I am quite sure that the record would bear convincing testimony of the gradual improvement of our penitentiary system.

With sincere respect and esteem,

I remain your friend,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

REV. JOHN LUCKEY.

CHAPTER XII.

A DESPERADO TAMED.

A Desperado—Attempt to Escape—Retaken—Harsh Usage—Dreadful Rencounter—Horrible Punishment—Change of Treatment—Improvement.

In the summer of 1840, the Deputy Sheriff of New York brought to the Agent's office a middle-aged, iron-sided, and every way rough-looking prisoner, whom he called "Jim."

His commitment showed that he had been convicted of robbery in the first degree, and sentenced by Judge Morris to "hard labor in Sing Sing prison for the term of fifteen years." When "Jim" had retired, in charge of the appropriate officer, to be dressed in stripes, the Deputy began the too frequent coarse detail of his heroic encounter with the prisoner at his arrest. The account was indeed appalling, and produced, of course, a very unfavorable opinion, in the minds of the prison officers, respecting the natural disposition of the newly arrived prisoner.

As nearly as I can recollect (for I was present), the robbery was represented as having been the most

daring, reckless and defiant, that had been perpetrated for years; and the capture—on account of the darkness of the selected retreat, the brandishing of knives, the presentation of pistols, and the exceedingly profane threats on the part of the prisoner, that he would not be taken alive—the most hazardous.

Notwithstanding the official proclamation of these dreadful antecedents, Jim found that kind of treatment from Messrs. McDuffie and Seymour, which caused him to settle down in quiet obedience for at least two years, when, either from a disturbed imagination or restless impulses, both of which were characteristic, he attempted to make his escape.

Jim worked in the blacksmith shop in the lower story of the north wing. Above him was the boot and shoe shop. In the west end of his shop were two or three convicts employed making packing boxes for the contractor of the shoe shop.

Whether he was measured for the purpose or not, I cannot say, but he appropriated one of these boxes to his own use, and on the day that the sloop which conveyed "prison wares" to the city sailed, he packed himself, or was packed away in one of said boxes with "food and raiment" sufficient for his adventurous voyage.

To despoil his air-tight cabin of its suffocating properties, he pocketed a gimlet. Thus provided, he laid himself down in his snug harbor and was nailed up, trundled to the dock, and dumped: but, alas! he

was laid neither "right side up" nor "with care," and in this predicament he "stood" for the space of half an hour. After the *live* box was put on board, the sloop under way, and the hands had come down to the warm stove, Jim's box, having been left near the stove, was turned on its end by one of the hands, for a temporary seat. Again our hero found himself *standing on his head*, so near the red-hot stove, that, had he been a turkey, he must, he thinks, have been "well done" in less than sixty minutes. He declared his firm conviction that no mortal ever endured as much torture, during the twenty or thirty minutes he was in this condition, as he did.

He was, several times, on the point of crying "enough," but the returning, shuddering thought of the fearful result that must attend his discovery and the hope, however faint, that he might yet succeed in his attempt to escape, suppressed the rising cry. Suddenly, at the well known shout, "All hands on deck," the one occupying the *live* box sprang to his feet with a sudden bound, thus giving a considerable jolt to his seat, which Jim managed to facilitate to its overthrow by a simultaneous "internal motion." The box fell on its side, at least its width further from the stove, which rendered the adventurer's situation comparatively comfortable for the remainder of the voyage.

The sloop had left the prison dock scarcely two hours when the secret telegram, "a man is missing," went from officer to officer through the entire prison,

and produced an immediate "locking up" of the convicts and a general search for the lost man. As usual, scouts were sent out to traverse the adjacent woods and "blockade" the public roads. Officer R. L., being more acute in following eccentric trails than the less experienced keepers, taking other officers with him, went post haste to New York and met the sloop on her arrival. "Ahoy, Captain! have you got any live stock in human shape aboard: one of our coveys?" cried R. L. "I rather guess not, but you are welcome to board and search," was the calm response. No sooner said than done, and the first box that R. L. tumbled over proved to be the *live box*. The anonymous individual to whose care Jim had consigned his "boots and shoes" stood, doubtless, at a prudent distance, gazing upon the confiscation of his goods, but was powerless to prevent the catastrophy.

And how must poor Jim have felt in view of all the sufferings—past, present, and to come—connected with this unsuccessful voyage? While these two were lamenting their fate, the *posse* of prison officials were rejoicing over their "good luck;" and rending the suspected box asunder, out rolled Jim, so much exhausted, however, that he could neither stand, walk, or even talk aloud. It was a month or two before he recovered sufficiently to do much work. Having been self-punished so severely, the punishment usually inflicted on such occasions was exceedingly light, and Jim went on working in his quiet way until the change of the

prison administration already alluded to occurred; when the adage "like priests like people," or, as are the keepers so will be the convicts, was plainly indicated in Jim's manners. When the "reign of terror" was fully initiated under Capt. L.'s command, it was, by Jim and his compeers, resisted with the same fierce, determined, "don't-care-what-becomes-of-me" spirit that the officials manifested in swaying their "knock-down-and-drag-out" sceptres. The old Jewish doctrine, "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," seemed to be in full vogue again—a bloody time ensued for some three months. None were flogged more frequently and cruelly, and none were more resistant and rebellious, than Jim; so much so indeed that at length when any mischief or wrong-doing occurred in his shop, he was directly or indirectly charged with it, and no opportunity given to deny, explain, or apologize—which produced in him an uncontrollable phrenzy, and finally led to a most dreadful rencounter. Jim was working, as usual, at his forge, in which was a bar of iron some six feet long and red hot. On seeing several keepers, armed *cap-a-pie*, enter the shop door, and, joining his keeper, direct their course towards him, he, divining their intentions, seized the blazing bar, raised it on high, and—amidst whizzing bullets and brandishing of loaded canes—dashed away, right and left, at the officials, knocking one down senseless, severely injuring another, and causing a third to run for his life; but he was finally captured, at the com-

mand of his keeper, by other convicts, who until then had apparently been indifferent spectators. I shall, perhaps, never forget the dismal impression the profane shouts and the sharp crackings of pistol shots, as they fell upon my ear on that occasion, made upon my mind. I was quite positive, from my previous knowledge of Jim's character, and the conversations I had had with his shop-mates, that Jim was made the "scape-goat" of the shop, and consequently likely to be entirely clear of the transgression he was suspected of on the present occasion ; and if so, that he would resist to the death any attempt to drag him again to the dread "whipping-post in the bloody hall."

He was, of course, flogged almost to death, and "laid aside" with the threat that as soon as his lacerated back was sufficiently healed to render it exquisitely sensible to "another hundred lashes," he should have them, and so on, while any feeling of pain could be produced. Meanwhile, I was commissioned to visit him and endeavor to persuade him to acknowledge that he was guilty of the offence with which he was originally charged. I visited him, but I did not fully carry out my "instructions;" for, instead of making strenuous efforts to persuade him to acknowledge what I knew he would not, and strongly suspected, in truth, could not—I asked him why he made such an onslaught upon the keepers when he saw they were so well supplied with pistols and loaded canes. "A speedy death from pistol or loaded cane," he faintly

whispered, "is far preferable to being tortured to death by the cat, as was my only prospect under the circumstances. The new keeper," he added, "don't understand me as you do, and will never hear any explanation or defence; consequently, if there is any thing wrong or amiss in the shop it is charged to me, and I am instantly punished for it, and the punishment is increased if I attempt to deny it. On the present occasion I was positive that I had done nothing amiss, and as positive that it would avail me nothing to make such an assertion. When I saw the keeper making towards me, I became frantic, and felt that I had rather die than live. This, Mr. Luckey, is the reason why I acted as I did." I asked him if he supposed the convicts in his shop would confirm what he said concerning his innocence, if they were brought before the Inspectors for that purpose. His countenance brightened up at this suggestion. "Yes, indeed; yes; I have no doubt of it, and I'll pray for you, wicked as I am, as long as I live, if you will bring this to pass." Seeing that he was exhausted, I left him and hastened to Mr. Edmonds, who, I knew, was beginning to have his eyes opened to the cruel, unjust, brutalizing "discipline" then in full operation, and related to him all that Jim had said, together with my knowledge of his general character and former conduct.

Judge Edmonds' quick apprehension covered the case instantly, and hence he gave orders, if I mistake

not, that Jim should be flogged no more till the meeting of the Inspectors, which would take place in a few days. They met at the time appointed, convicts were examined (informally, of course), and Jim's statement confirmed. He was released, and ever after showed his gratitude by a uniform course of obedience and integrity.

I ought to say, in justice to my old friend, that subsequently similar interpositions of Judge Edmonds had, in many instances, a direct and sudden effect to reform convicts who had been reported as incorrigible. He was, indeed, the means of much good accruing to prison discipline, for which I shall ever remember him with great respect.

Jim was one of the best mechanics we had, and under the new phase of "mild but firm discipline" he constantly grew in favor of man and, *he thought*, of God.

We find him in less than a year stationed in a blacksmith shop, erected by the Agent, on the hill, some eighty rods from the main prison. Here he had the sole charge of making and repairing the wedges, crowbars, and all the iron tools used in making the branch Croton Aqueduct, for the prison, and for working the quarry. The keeper who had the charge of these working companies, had, I presume, an eye upon Jim occasionally, but the one who locked him up at night told me one day, as I was looking at Jim while employed along the line in gathering up the broken and blunt tools to repair them, that Jim managed his

transactions with the men so "dignifiedly" that no one seemed inclined to complain of his course, or dispute his claims of being "boss" of his department. He was allowed, on the score of merit, to fence in a small space of land about his shop, and till it. As, in going to and returning from the prison, I passed his domain twice a day, I had a good opportunity of witnessing the growth of his garden. He raised vegetables of various kinds, and kept a bevy of fowls, and feasted on them at his pleasure. This was a wonder at the time, but convicts and all seemed to say, "Let him have them for he is worthy." This decision, which he did not fail to perceive, gave him, I think, the idea of a religious change which he, about this time, professed to experience, the *reality* of which, I had my own reasons for doubting.

That he made such a profession, is evident from two or three records I find in my memoranda of this date :

"*December* 14*th*, 1845.—James —— sent for me to visit him at his cell. Says he wants to be baptized ; that he is a different man from what he was ; had no father, when he was young, to watch over and care for him ; says that keeper K.'s wife knew him well for years ; had frequently in his boyhood to sleep among the hogs, and by this hard usage was led nearly to destruction ; met with his present change, which he thinks was spiritual, on the 15th of last November ; feels no rising of bad temper since he made up his mind to be useful."

Mrs. K. confirmed his statement of his rough usage when he was a lad.

"*January* 18*th*, 1846.—James —— wants a work on African Missions; intends to go there to do good; wants I should tell Mr. Weeks [Mr. Jonas Weeks, of Albany, and of precious memory] that he has studied the passage recommended to him by Mr. W., with great profit."

With my views of the deranged state of Jim's moral feelings, and knowledge of his natural impulsiveness and self-conceit, I felt myself compelled to waive his request to be baptized, the prudence of which, will, I think, be appreciated, on the perusal of the following letter, addressed, about this time, to his half-brother, which is given just as he wrote it.

SING SING, 10 March, 1846.

DAR BROTHER,

I wish to hear from you as quick as you receave this Letter from me. I am in prison Six years the 17th of this month. I want you to drop A Letter to John —— And tel him that I wish to se him as quick as the river opens If he can make it conveanyent you nedent try to git me a free pardon for I think it is all together out of your Influence for I wish to Leave and Intend to for Africa to the New settlement as A Mishenary by a Mishenary ship or with Capten A——, A friend of mine that is if helth & the will of God Permits me to go excepting of me servases unprofitable as they may be, spotted with the frutes of A Hory head the remainder of my life is to him Blessed be his

name and his suns name with the devine spirit. If you go to Newyork this Spring Please to stop and se me & Also give my respects to John Vanburen the Aterney Gennerell & tell him that I wish he wood A B ige me by stoping to se me on his way to York the First time he goes Se John McDuffe & request him in my name to ask his Mother for that Iverry hedded cane I left with Mr. McDuffe of which she said she would se that I had It for she Let a friend of heren hav It & woold git It Agane My Love & respects to the famale [family]

Tell Father [alluding to his step-father] I hope he will think of me In Frendship once more Please to se Jacob C—— my cusin he is A studdeing for A Lawyour with Andrew J. C—— Aterny at Law his cusin, & Mensh on In your Answer wat he ses consernin me & how all the famale is give my Best respecs to Mr Wickes and tell him I think of him Knight & Morning God bless you all & me Allso

JAMES ———

Soon after the date of this letter I left the Chaplaincy, and did not, therefore, see Jim again, though I frequently heard from him, until sometime in 1851, when he made his appearance one evening in our Five Points' Chapel and attempted to make a temperance speech ; but the same incoherent and vehement manner marked his words and actions ; hence, although I was more than ever convinced of the honesty of his purpose to continue in well-doing, I took prudent means to discourage his "public efforts."

That he retained the confidence of the prison authorities to the last, is evident from the fact that on

their recommendation Gov. Hunt was induced to grant him a pardon February 18th, 1851.

In the fall of 1852 he left New York for California, for, as he said, "missionary purposes," and since that time I have heard nothing of him.

CHAPTER XIII.

A DESPERATE CONVICT GIRL.

The neglected girl—Larceny—Prison life—Insubordination—Profanity and Blasphemy—Awful retribution—A wandering monomaniac.

In a western city there lived, a few years ago, a poor but industrious family. Before the eldest daughter had reached her teens, the mother was a widow. Having to struggle hard to provide for her family, she neglected, to a great extent, the moral as well as physical education of her children. This neglect operated more unfavorably upon the eldest than upon the other children—she being more exposed than they. It fell to her lot to perform the errands of the family. This brought her constantly among the snares and vices usually exhibited at groceries, markets and docks, which she was called to visit. In this school of vice and pollution she soon became a proficient in profanity and vulgarity. Her passions, the mean time, becoming more and more violent and uncontrollable. It was not long before a disposition for pilfering was developed, which at length attracted

the attention of the police. Hence, she was convicted of "petit larceny, second offence;" and on the 15th of June, 18—, she was sentenced for two years, to the "Female Prison" at Sing Sing.

The building for this branch of the prison, stands upon an eminence some twenty rods from the "Male Prison." The tiers of cells are enclosed by the main building, having on each side of them a large hall. These were formerly occupied as work-shops. In one of these, this convict was employed immediately upon her arrival. At that time there were about sixty female prisoners, the most of whom, for want of proper work-shops, were necessarily brought together in these halls. Since then, suitable shops have been provided, which circumstance conduces much to wholesome discipline. About this time the manufacturing of silk was introduced into the prison. The machinery employed made so much noise and confusion, that the rule of silence and non-intercourse could be transgressed with ease. The subject of this narrative was swift to embrace the opportunity thus presented for holding frequent conversation with those near her. Being naturally possessed of a morose and quarrelsome disposition, and having a rough and profane manner of expressing herself, her intercourse with other convicts had a very deleterious effect upon the discipline of the prison. Much of the excitement and insubordination among the prisoners could be traced to her conversation and influence. In this way she

passed the principal part of the time during her imprisonment. On or near the 1st of May, 18—, a very singular incident occurred in connection with her history. Having recorded the principal facts of this incident at the time of its occurrence, I transcribe it from my journal in this connection.

"On the 12th instant she was employed, as usual, on that side of the prison where the buzzing of the quill-wheels interrupted the order of the discipline very much. She improved the advantage of this interruption for purposes of conversation. The assistant Matron detected and reproved her. When the assistant Matron had passed on, she took occasion to vent her spite by saying, in much apparent passion, "I will not stop talking for her; I will not stop for God Almighty!" And then, to carry out this purpose, as she by many signs affirms, she turned to those convicts next to her and made, apparently, a most powerful effort to speak, but could make no kind of noise; nor has she pronounced a syllable since, which is more than a week. She succeeds in making us understand quite distinctly almost any thing she wishes to, by selecting words from her Bible and Prayer-book, which, when put together, convey her meaning; what is wanting in this mode of communication, is made up in signs. In this way we have ascertained that the power of utterance was taken away from her with the suddenness, to use her own figure, of electricity. She believes it to be a punishment of God, designed to warn her companions in

crime against presumption and blasphemy. She says, and repeats it again and again, that her doom is unalterably fixed; but that in it God is infinitely just. What she designed to say, when she made the effort to speak, and could not, was to boast of the shortness of her time here, it being only one month; but now her departure seems to be her dread; and one reason she gives for it is, that her affliction was evidently designed as a warning for her fellow convicts, and therefore she wishes to stay until she "drops into hell." This appears to be her whole theme by day and night. In answering the various questions asked her, she indicates the most free and healthy exercise of her *intellectual* powers; and her physician is quite positive that her difficulty is not physical. The only legitimate conclusion therefore is, that her affliction is of a *moral* character. The most important question involved in this matter, whether her dumbness is voluntary or involuntary. In the solution of this question, reference should be had to the fact, that while there is no motive to a voluntary speechlessness, there are many collateral proofs that it is involuntary, and, therefore, judicial: such are, 1st—The term of her imprisonment expires in less than a month, when the social comfort of seeing and conversing with her mother and friends will occur. In reference to this event she had frequently expressed delightful anticipations; but now all these hopes are blasted. And can any suppose this to be the result of her voluntary act? 2d—Her pas-

sions, her will, and her declared purpose, were all concerned in her first effort to speak, and hence she had then, and has now, the undissembled appearance of having been sadly mortified and shocked in not being able to carry her impious threats into execution; constantly affirming that she is not sorry for having offended God, but only that she cannot speak."

As I gave no positive opinion concerning this affair at the time of its occurrence, I will not now; but leave every reader to make up his own judgment from the facts before him. I would state, however, that the excellent matron, Mrs. Bard, employed every judicious effort to induce her to speak; and although she seemed at times to have a great desire to comply with the matron's wish, yet she did not utter a syllable before, nor for some two weeks after, she left the prison.

On leaving the prison she found kind friends in the family of the door-keeper of the female prison. Here, at night, and in the midst of a most terrible thunder-storm, she recovered her speech with the same suddenness that attended its loss. Now, for the first time in many days, a feeble ray of hope that she was not utterly lost, penetrated the deep, dark gloom of her obdurate heart. Still she manifested a reservedness and melancholy that indicated the predominance of despair. In this frame of mind she left the village with the ultimate design, as was supposed, of returning to her mother.

The next and *last* authentic information I received respecting her, went to say that despair and melancholy had marked her as their victim. She was found by a pious friend traversing the streets of New York, with her prison Bible in one hand, and her shoes in the other, inquiring for employment in a religious family. She utterly refused to enter any but religious families; giving as a reason, her desire to be protected by them from the evil spirits which she fancied were pursuing her, and of being instructed in religious duties. Her feet were bruised and swollen in a dreadful manner, from having walked so much with her feet bare. When asked why she did so, her answer was, that in mortifying the flesh she had some distant hope that she might once more be blessed with the visitation of the Holy Spirit. I think she was not a Catholic; consequently this impression was not derived from the idea of "doing penance." This lady performed the part of the good Samaritan towards this poor creature. She molified her wounds with her own hands, and obtained a place for her in a religious family.

CHAPTER XIV.

MORAL MANIA—CASES OF R. T. AND P. W.

Insanity—Eloquence—Fatal catastrophy.

THROUGH the kindness of a professional friend, I have lately had the reading of "A treatise on the Medical Jurisprudence of Insanity, by J. Ray, M. D." As his seventh chapter is principally devoted to the consideration of *moral mania* in its *medico legal* relations, and as his views are sustained by some of the most eminent medical writers of the age, I shall present the reader with a few extracts, as confirmatory of the opinions I have suggested, respecting some cases which I shall give in this and succeeding chapters.

"Thus far," says our author, "mania has been considered as affecting the intellectual faculties only; but a more serious error on this subject can scarcely be committed, than that of limiting its influence to them. . . . It is defined by Prichard . . . as consisting in a morbid perversion of the natural feelings, affections, inclinations, temper, habits and moral dispositions, without any notable lesion of the intellect, or knowing and reasoning faculties." Our author refers

to certain cases of evident insanity, in which "the individuals perform most of the common duties of life with propriety, and some of them, indeed, with scrupulous exactness, who exhibit no strangely marked features of temperament, no traits of superior or defective mental endowment, but yet take violent antipathies, harbor unjust suspicions, indulge strong propensities, affect singularity in dress, gait and phraseology; are proud, conceited and ostentatious; easily excited, with difficulty appeased; dead to sensibility, delicacy and refinement; obstinately riveted to the most absurd opinions; prone to controversy, and yet incapable of reasoning; always the hero of their own tale, using hyperbolic, high-flown language to express the most simple ideas, accompanied by unnatural gesticulations, inordinate actions, and frequently, by the most alarming expression of countenance. On some occasions they suspect sinister motives on the most trivial grounds; on others are a prey to fear and dread from the most ridiculous and imaginary sources; now embracing every opportunity of exhibiting romantic courage and feats of hardihood, then indulging themselves in all manner of excesses. Persons of this description, to the casual observer, might appear actuated by a bad heart. but the experienced physician knows it is the head which is affected and defective."

We have just discharged a perfect counterpart of the foregoing portraiture by the name of R. T. She was convicted of grand-larceny and sent here for

four years. She was of course subjected to the same discipline that the other convicts were, as under the "contract system" there can be no classification of convicts, and consequently no difference of treatment without creating very troublesome jealousies. She was about eighteen years of age when she came, and from the first gave evidence that she had never subjected her naturally impulsive nature to either domestic or self-control. Hers was evidently "a state in which the reason has lost its empire of the passions and actions." Once a month, or more frequently, she would suddenly and without any real provocation, become alarmingly noisy, meddlesome, abusive and vulgar in her language, so much so indeed, as to put the whole prison in a state of disorder and render it necessary to put her in an outer cell, in order to restore order and quiet among the convicts. While there, I heard her a quarter of a mile off, alternately shout, cry, sing songs and hymns, until she would exhaust her strength, or send a message of repentance to the Matron. When the latter was the case, she would make the most hearty and apparently ingenuous demonstrations of sorrow for her misdeeds, of any person I ever saw, save perhaps, Henrietta Robinson.

I once wrote a letter for her immediately upon her having been released from one of these "cell punishments," when the first words she desired me to write to her mother or brother, (I do not now recollect which,) were, "I have been again very naughty and

troublesome. I have given the kind matrons much vexation ; why I do so, I can't tell ; it seems to me I am possessed of the devil. Won't you pray for me that I may not be lost eternally."

The opinion of those who witnessed these sudden extreme and frequent changes, was that she was hypocritical in her professions of sorrow, and I thought it would then produce no beneficial results to protest against that notion, but I was then as fully convinced as I am now that her regrets at the moment they were expressed, were not only sincere, but deep and pungent, and as little connected with the "counsels of reason," as were her ebullitions of passion. Similar transactions took place in her case ; and this is only a stronger type of several others in that department whom we have to subdue almost weekly, taxing to a most painful extent the patience and forbearance of the matron and her assistants—a burden from which the present prison arrangements admit of no relief. Towards the latter part of her term, she managed by the watchful aid of her matron, "to keep out of trouble," as she called it, for over a month, on account of which, she seemed very happy, and having sent for me, she came up to me, her face beaming with pleasant emotions, and said, "The matron says I have been a good girl, and she hopes I will yet be able to overcome my evil ways, and if I do, will you baptize me, Mr. Luckey, so that I can go home to my mother a christian?" "Yes, Rachel," I replied, "if the matron will

assure me near the close of your term that your conduct has been such as to warrant a belief that you have truly repented of your sins, and believed with your 'heart unto righteousness,' I shall delight to administer to you that sacred ordinance." "I will try with all my might to do so," was her delighted response. Away she went to her work with, I believe, as firm a resolution as any person in her moral condition could make, to comply with the terms I had proposed; but alas! on the very next Sabbath, some one of her fellow-prisoners having, while taking their seats in the chapel, appropriated too much of Rachel's seat to her own use, caused another and more terrible eruption of the volcano within her. Again she repented and asked to see me. The matron granted her request. To test her skill for composition as well as her moral condition, I permitted her to write a letter to her mother in her own hand. The penmanship was good, the orthography faultless, and the language, as before, full of regrets, sorrow, and promises of amendment.

Thus she moved on till within three weeks of her release, when she was permitted to have an interview with Mr. Beal, the agent of the New York Prison Association, who was then visiting us. She pressed Mr. Beal to promise to receive her, on the day of her discharge, and take her to the N. Y. & Erie R. R. depot, and send her to her mother's residence at the West. I never saw a person appear to be more ardent

in any request than she appeared to be, and for the time, I have no doubt, really was what she seemed to be. Mr. Beal, who was somewhat acquainted with her frailty, said to her, "Rachel, I am aware of your having given the matron and chaplain considerable trouble, I therefore cannot promise you this, unless they are able to send a note to me by you, signifying that you have behaved well from this time until you are discharged. If you will have no *break outs* till then, I will do all you desire and more too." She thanked him heartily, and in tears promised most faithfully she would fulfill the condition on her part. But, in less than a week she had "broken out," as violently as ever, and "continued doing so" up to the day of her departure. The agent was therefore compelled to send one of the keepers to the Erie Railroad cars with her, who, on his return, reported her good conduct on her way thither, and that "she took her seat therein as ladylike as any of the other passengers did." I have heard nothing of her since. Such cases show the necessity for an insane hospital in connection with our prisons; for which the legislature has made the necessary appropriation, and which, it is hoped, will be speedily furnished.

In another place the same writer remarks, "The contrast often presented in moral mania between the state of the intellectual and that of the moral faculties is one of its striking features. These patients can reason logically and acutely on any subject within

their knowledge, and extol the beauties of virtue, while their conduct is filled with acts of folly and at war with every principle of moral propriety. Their moral nature seems to have undergone an entire revolution. The sentiments of truth, honor, honesty, benevolence and purity have given place to mendacity, dishonesty, obscenity and selfishness, and all sense of shame and self-control have disappeared, while the intellect has lost none of its usual power to argue, convince, please and charm. . . . In nothing, however, is the intellectual soundness more strikingly evinced than in the ingenuity with which these persons endeavor to explain the folly and absurdity of their acts and reconcile them to the ordinary rules of human action. . . . There is, undoubtedly, a great tendency in this affection to pass into intellectual."

The appalling *truth* contained in the last sentence quoted, I have witnessed in scores of instances. The case that now strikes me as being most in point, is that of T. P. W. He was sent here from Albany in Jan., 1842, charged with having committed forgery in the 3d degree. T. P. W. was a tall, well-proportioned, and fine looking man. He gave evidence of having received a good common education, and of having improved it by general reading. His wife, who was a clergyman's daughter, was, as will appear from her letters, a pious and intelligent woman, and manifested much affection and concern for him and his relatives, who were also very respectable.

At first sight I regarded him as a maniac, or far advanced towards that state. The glare and glassiness of his eye, the quickness of motion, together with his untiring loquacity tended to produce that impression, and it was strengthened by the account given by the officer who brought him here, of the last acts performed by him in his cell at Albany.

"Don't you think," said he to our officers, "that scoundrel of a hypocrite would not let his wife leave his cell this morning till he prayed with her; and a devil of a fine prayer it was too. I never heard any minister make half as able a prayer as he did, I can assure you; and then such a snivelling and crying as there was between them, when I brought him out, you never heard."

This poor fellow fared very well for about a year, as he was under the humane administration introduced by Mr. D. L. Seymour, during that length of time. He wrote to and received letters from his excellent wife. The first one from his wife, which I retained, reads as follows:

TROY, Sabbath evening, Feb. 12th, 1843.

MY DEAR HUSBAND,

Mrs. S. called here this morning just as I was preparing for church, and kindly offered to be the bearer of any communication I might wish to make to my poor husband. I heartily thanked her for the unexpected opportunity, and I am now seated in our *tea room* where we have spent so many pleasant hours, to address a few lines to you; and now what shall I say

first, so many things crowd upon my mind I hardly know where to commence, and then again when I think of your situation—and I think of it *so much* that I am at times almost driven to distraction. Be not surprised if you find a want of connection in the contents of this sheet. I can say that in the midst of my *deep affliction* I have many things to be thankful for; my health is better than it was last summer, my friends are kind while I am separated from the being to whom I had entrusted my earthly happiness. How good is God to one of the most unworthy of his creatures. When I feel, as I sometimes do, entirely sundered from earthly hope and happiness, I go to my Heavenly Father and find his arm strong, his promises sure, and I endeavor to be happy in his will, and try to be cheerful under his most afflicting providences. It is when I can get near the throne of grace and supplicate mercy for myself and husband that I find the most, and I might have said the only enjoyment. This is a satisfaction the world can neither give nor take away. I feel that I am separated from my husband, to show me my sin in placing my affection so much upon the creature. . .

. . . I do desire very much to know the state of your mind. If this affliction does not soften our hearts we may expect still deeper. Let us, my dear husband, learn obedience by the things we suffer; God is good, and does not afflict willingly, this may prove one of our greatest blessings: it will if we improve it aright. *Pray often*, . . . cast all your sorrows upon Him who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

. . . Oh, my dear husband, I cannot in language describe my anxiety. Would that I could feel more to trust my all in the hands of a kind Providence. .

. . And now, my dear husband, I would commend you to the grace of God, praying most fervently that

it may be magnified in the salvation of your undying soul.

I remain affectionately your wife,

A—— ———

Although a vein of mania could be seen, by close observation, in all his writings, words, and actions, he seemed to get neither better nor worse until the spring of 1843, when as soon as the severe discipline commenced, his mania began very perceptibly to increase, and of course the stripes inflicted upon him were not a few. As soon as I dare venture it, although on account of the sternness manifested towards me at that time, some months had to elapse, I intimated to "the Captain" my opinion respecting this man's mania, asking at the same time that he might be more leniently dealt with on account of it. I shall never forget the withering sarcasm manifested in his reply. It was this, "Your opinion of that hypocritical scoundrel's case reminds me of the decision of one of your benevolent dupes on a similar case in Wethersfield prison. This fool would insist upon it that a certain unruly convict was deranged. The Warden asked him how he had ascertained that said convict was insane; the old granny replied that he had opened the bosom of the convict's shirt and smelt of his breast, and thereby become convinced of the fact. Perhaps you have done the same." I did not venture to interpose another word for this unfortunate man during the four months of the "Captain's" *unchecked* sway.

About this time, when T. P. W. had evidently become much more wandering in his mind than formerly, Dr. West preached to the prisoners a very eloquent and effective discourse against infidelity. Next day as the Doctor was passing through the different shops, he came to the one where this poor fellow was at work. The latter quick as thought left his work, presented himself before the Doctor, and bowing and scraping with all the pleasantness and gentility of a Frenchman, said to him, "Pardon the liberty I take sir, in addressing you under present circumstances, but really, my dear sir, I could not refrain from seizing the present opportunity of returning you thanks for the superbly eloquent and effective discourse you gave us yesterday. I said at once, sir," continued he, with perfect *sang froid*, "when I ascertained you were an American, if Ireland had a Sheridan and England a Pitt, we had a West who was in all respects their equal." Here his eloquence was interrupted by the iron grasp of the keeper, who dragged him off, doubtless, to the "whipping post," for we heard "lamentations and mourning" in that quarter soon after. Notwithstanding this rough "arrest," T. P. W. left the Doctor and myself with bows and smiles. The Doctor did not know his doom, but I did; therefore while the Doctor was smiling with pleasure in remembrance of the occurrence, I was sad at heart, being convinced that he was an irresponsible maniac. Thus with erratic ebullitions of various kinds, this poor man subjected himself to

almost weekly punishments, until his diseased mind took a gloomy turn. About this time I received the following letter from his wife.

And what untold grief and affliction the perusal might have prevented! Heaven save the unfortunate from such oppressive misruling in future. This letter reads thus:

T——, August 10th, 1843.

My Dear Husband,

I have taken up my pen, thinking it may be a relief to my burdened heart and perhaps afford you a small gratification to peruse a few lines from your deeply afflicted wife. They will be very imperfect I am sure, for when I attempt to address you I am deprived of all mental composure. This I strive against but my body is rather weak, and of course the mind is affected. Oh, my husband, I know this is wrong, and I would strive to glorify God in just that course of his providence which he may appoint and acquiesce cheerfully in his will. . . . I feel that I can say in the language of another, "I am afflicted as much as I can be on the one hand, and comforted and stayed up by the Omnipotent's arm on the other." I cannot refrain from saying to you, I feel it a duty I owe myself and my husband, the bitter reflections I have had that I did not while living with you better adorn the solemn profession I have made to be unreservedly the Lord's. I have tried in a feeble manner to humble myself and supplicate the mercy of an *offended God*, and I would now plead the forgiveness of my husband, and entreat him to overlook my imperfections and the frequent neglect of Christian duty as it respects myself and him. If I am not deceived, I desire to live more entirely with reference to that great day of account

when the secrets of every heart will be made manifest. . . . If we would get out of trouble effectually, we must begin with repentance, and seek forgiveness, and then in due time deliverence, rest, inward peace and comfort will ensue. Heavy afflictions often extort from sinners cries and prayers for relief, but if the Lord regards these cries and prayers he will convince the sufferers of their guilt and lead them to repentance, for without this no deliverance will eventually prove a blessing. . . . . I go out but seldom, do not mix with society at all, and am now quite alone excepting Ruth. . . .

I will not attempt to tell you what I suffered two or three weeks since when told, in a very abrupt manner, by a young *gentleman*, the Prison at S. S. was burnt and quite a number of the convicts had escaped. I *could not*, I *did not* think you could be one, but I had so *many fears*. I did not know what my husband might be left to do. It completely prostrated me for several days, until I ascertained that only a small part of the story was true. I said nothing to my parents, if I had, Pa could have relieved me ; but I could not speak of it. I saw a statement of facts in the *Observer*. I carried my sorrows to my Heavenly Father, earnestly pleading that the intelligence might be favorable, as it was. Oh, my husband, neglect not daily to offer this petition taught us in our Lord's Prayer, "Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil." We have the promise he will succor those that are tempted, for He knows our infirmities, and has been tempted like us. . . . She said L. intended to go and see you before he went home. I hope he did ; but I fear he did not. She remarked if tears could open the prison doors, T. would be at liberty. I do not think of anything more that is important to communicate. It is not in my power to proclaim pardon to

my poor husband, but I would implore submission without murmur to the will of God Often when mourning over your unhappy fate, the thought occurs in all its interest, he is not where *hope* cannot cheer, although his body is confined, his soul may be free. I would say then, cling to your Saviour.

> "That anchor, hope, shall firm abide,
> And every boisterous storm outride."

Though our hearts are ready to faint at the roughness of the way, He has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."—Please let me hear from you as soon as convenient. I have written as much as the weakness of my head will permit. I remain your affectionate

A—— ———.

Allow me here, by way of testing "public opinion" in reference to the superiority of the *prohibitory* system over that of the prudent liberal one, to put the question to every reader of this sketch, what possible harm could the perusal of this letter (and the great bulk of our letters were of the same character) do that afflicted husband? or what injury could the discipline of the prison have sustained by it? And yet, by the rules of universal prohibition, both of books and letters, in *active* force at that time, I was forbidden to let him or any other convict see the letters sent to them, and also to give any information whatever to any of them respecting their friends, excepting the laconic message, "your friends are well," and even in regard to this I was given to understand that the discretionary power was altogether with the principal keeper.

T. P. W., never knew that his wife had sent this letter. He was perfectly ignorant of her deep sympathies which, he used to tell me apparently with the deepest emotion, he valued beyond description. His wife's *supposed* silence, and his brother's not visiting him, had, in my opinion, the effect, in conjunction with his ill-treatment, to fix, *irretrievably*, his insanity upon him ! !

Besides, supposing the prison authorities have the legal right to thus torment convicts, what right have they, one would ask, in the name of God and humanity, to afflict and aggravate the already broken hearts of their innocent wives and mothers by thus rudely intercepting the communications of their noble and ennobling sympathies ? Is not this indiscriminate prohibition a usurpation against which enlightened humanity must unequivocally rebel ? The child-like moanings after intelligence from his wife, which were heard by day and night coming from this poor man's cell, were enough to soften the heart and produce a temporary laxity of the most stringent rules. Not so, however, in his case during the "reign of terror." Instead of this, his drooping, despondent, and mournful appearance, was construed into "a hypocritical old soldierism," that is, the *feigning* of sickness and melancholy, solely for the purpose of getting rid of work ; hence, when he was heard bemoaning his forsaken and forlorn condition, he was complained of and flogged for it, which occurred almost daily.

This heartless, cruel treatment made him feel still more keenly the *supposed* neglect of his "dear wife," and pine for the kindness and sympathy which none but a wife like her could give. Not long after this, as I was passing his cell, I heard instead of lamentations and moaning, the well-known maniac laugh. Although I had, under the treatment he received, expected such a result, yet when it thus suddenly broke upon my ear, it almost overpowered me, and I determined to make another trial for lenity, in his behalf. Providentially my way was made clear by the appointment that very day of Mr. Eldridge as Principal Keeper in the place of Captain L——. Pursuant to this resolution, I did speak to our new Principal Keeper, who promptly replied, "I will take a personal supervision of that case, Mr. Luckey, and I thank you for bringing it to my notice, as I have been inclined to the same opinion respecting him for some time past." He did so, and consequently prevented any further punishment being inflicted upon him.

But mercy, in this case, came *too late!* the die was cast, the work of destruction was done. He would dance, sing songs, and curse most profanely at one time, and then be heard singing hymns, praying, and delivering sermons; hence, the first opportunity that occurred, Mr. Eldridge and myself presented his case to the Board of Inspectors who on examination, immediately ordered him sent to the Bloom-

ingdale Asylum. This order took effect on the 21st of May, 1844. He died there in less than a month afterwards "a raving maniac." So writes the principal physician of that institution. Immediately the newspapers teemed with "accounts of the dreadful tragedy; the convict T. P. W., driven to stark madness by the cruelties he received, and the dreadful floggings he endured at the Sing Sing Prison," &c., &c.

These "accounts of the dreadful tragedy" went the round of the newspapers until they reached the ears and *hearts* of T. P. W.'s wife and friends. It appears from a letter, evidently dictated by Mrs. T. P. W., that she employed her brother to go to Albany and procure the desired information respecting the manner and cause of her husband's death, through one of Mr. Seymour's assistant keepers, for he wrote me the following letter.

ALBANY, July 23d, 1844.

DEAR SIR:

I was requested by a gentleman that called in the store this afternoon to write you concerning T. P. W.; he thinks it may be some other man, than the one sent from Albany. If it is the one that he thinks it is, he married a minister's daughter in Troy.

I think he must be a relation of his wife, for he will not be satisfied until he hears from *you*. Please answer as soon as possible, for he will remain here until I receive an answer. If you have time please write all the particulars that will be interesting to me. Yours truly,

W. H——.

I answered this letter cautiously but fully, which is referred to in the letter from his brother L., which follows:

P——, Sept. 10th, 1844.

MR. LUCKEY,

SIR :—I take the liberty to write you concerning the death of my brother, T. P. W., the unfortunate person who fell a victim to the cruelty of State Prison discipline. I have heard a great deal about the treatment of my unfortunate brother that is contradictory, or rather I have read it in different papers, and cannot place much reliance on my information. We feel very anxious about the affair, and wish to know the truth. If you can give us any information it will be very gratefully received by his distressed and agonized parents, brothers and sisters. His wife, I am told, has received some information on the subject from Sing Sing.

I wish you would write immediately, if convenient, and let me know the result of your inquiries. Please direct your letters to yours respectfully,

L—— E. W——.

Immediately after the full development of this tragedy, Judge Edmonds and his associates caused a separate and extensive building to be erected and separated it off in commodious apartments for the incorrigible and insane, principally however for the latter, which proved to be as beneficial as it was humane; but it has been long since removed to give place for the Hudson River Rail Road.

CHAPTER XV.

AN UNFORTUNATE MARRIAGE.

An unfortunate marriage—Dissipated husband — Broken-hearted mother's death—Degraded children—Deaths in prison—Horrible gloom—Dreadful aspect of prison life.

NEAR the banks of the noble Hudson, there resided not very long since a plain, industrious, and generous farmer. His companion for life was of the same general stamp of character. They pursued the old-fashioned course in providing for their wants. They raised and manufactured into cloth their own flax and wool, consequently "female help" was sought. A young, healthy, and simple hearted "Yankee girl" was preferred and obtained. For months, and even years she seemed identified with the interests of this quiet family: cheerful, happy, and contented herself, she could not fail to promote the comfort and happiness of those with whom she lived. At length, however, a strange influence came over her. The lively interest she had manifested for some four or five years in the smallest affairs appertaining to the prosperity and comfort of her employers appeared gradually to

diminish. A counter interest had evidently taken possession of her unsophisticated mind. What it could be, was the secret inquiry of each member of the family. At length the question was solved. A sociable and somewhat sprightly young man was found to be paying his special attentions to her ; and *to her* there was of course something especially attractive about him. In a word, he had won her affections ; but the trouble was, she had learned from a reliable source that he was at this early period addicted to the intoxicating bowl, nor would even his affection for her induce him to promise " total abstinence." He could give any sort of security that he would never become a drunkard ; and thought it a reflection upon the energy of his character and strength of his intellect for her to question it. In view of his repeated and confident assertions, that he would never, never disgrace her or himself by becoming a drunkard, she, in spite of the frequent remonstrances of her friends, gave him her hand, as she had already given him her heart. For some time she had reason to suppose he had really lost his relish for the intoxicating cup in his love for her, and his delight in the society of the *bar-room*, for that of his own family circle. But in this she was deceived ; for instead of being at all times of his absence, attending, as she supposed, to his employment, she ascertained that he was occasionally seen with his former companions quaffing the liquid poison. This information began to drink up her spirits ; but still

she hoped, for he, in all the solemnity of plighted vows, reiterated his pledges of reform at each remonstrance she made. Thus she struggled, as woman's affections will, between love and fear, hope and despair, for many a long year ; he the meanwhile becoming worse and worse, until he became a perfect nuisance to society, and a dread and terror to his family ; and she, poor thing, after suffering by neglect and abuse, and having the pride of her heart wounded by the reflection that her nearest friend had thus degraded her and rendered himself odious and despicable to those who once were his friends, died of a broken heart.

She left, uneducated and unprotected, six or eight children—the eldest only about fourteen years, and the youngest but a few months old—to find their way as best they could through a wicked world. Having now no higher standard of moral action than the example of their father, my readers will not be surprised to learn that three of the sons found their way to the State prison. They early contracted a love for the " beverage " of their father ; and with it a relish for the society of the idler, the profane, and the pilferer. They had no pious mother to fit them for, and send them to the Sabbath school and the church. The sequel will show that two of them died in prison. On the occasion of the death of the one who died last, I sent for the surviving brother. When he arrived at my office, almost the first words he uttered

were, "Had my poor mother lived, I had not come here!"

This was said with so much force, and while he was quaking with the most gloomy apprehensions of his having to die in the prison hospital, as his two brothers had done, that it made a deep impression upon my mind. "Ah!" thought I, "while there is much, very much, to censure and deplore in such cases, there is much to pity and compassionate." But to return to the history of these worse than orphan children. The brother, who narrated these facts to me, was the youngest of the three prisoners, and evidently retained a greater degree of moral sensibility. The fact is, he had shared more largely than they of his mother's disposition and affections, which had proved a shield to guard him against the intemperate habits and irritable disposition of his father, and the pilfering practices of his two brothers. This was his first term in the prison, and hence the manifestation on his part of some moral and religious emotions at the death of his brother, and at his own degradation. It was very different with his brothers who died in prison. They were each confined for the second time within those gloomy walls; still, to all human appearance, growing harder and more perverse. The elder, amid drinking, carousing, quarrelling, and pilfering, made out to escape State prison from his youth up to the age of twenty-one, when he was convicted of burglary, and sentenced to the Sing Sing prison for two years.

The next year, his brother, some four years younger than he, having followed in the footsteps of the elder, was convicted of the same offence, and sentenced to the same place for the same length of time. I often endeavored to address their moral feelings during their first term, but as often failed to produce the desired effect. They appeared to have little or no moral sensibility in their natures. Their keepers had frequent occasion to complain of their petulance and insubordination, or their stupidity and stubbornness, which subjected them to frequent, and sometimes severe chastisements. I recollect hearing, with much agitation, the distant wailings of one of them while receiving a flogging for a flagrant transgression of the prison rules, only a day or two before his term expired. It would seem, however, that this severe flagellation, received on the very eve of his departure, failed to inspire him with that degree of dread of this most horrible place, which was sufficient to keep him from returning to it at the earliest opportunity. Eight short months found the two brothers in heavy irons, and on their way to the Sing Sing prison, under a sentence of five years for the same offence. But that which added much to their criminality, and rendered them still more odious to the community, was, that they had succeeded in contaminating their youngest brother, and bringing him with them to share in their degradation.

They pursued for nearly two years the same reck-

less and disorderly course they had manifested during their previous confinement. After remaining so long, the elder became strangely affected, sometimes raving like a maniac, and anon perfectly stupid and incommunicative. He was taken to the hospital, and placed under the care of the attendant physician. Here he would neither eat nor take the doctor's prescriptions. Whenever either was presented to him, with the most deliberate coolness and horrid imprecations, he would dash them from his lips. Nor could any persuasion or coercion of the physician induce him to change his course. He evidently had sufficient command of the little sense his licentious course had left him, to be responsible for its proper use. His decline was rapid. If, therefore, anything could be said or done to call his attention to a preparation for death, I saw it was high time to made the effort. I cannot doubt but he heard, and, as far as his limited moral capability would permit, he understood what I said. Such a fierce and fiendish gaze as he fixed upon me I never before witnessed, and hope I may never again. He made no reply, but gradually relapsed into one of his sullen moods. Thus he continued for a few days, alternately to vociferate the most horrid imprecations, and exhibit the filthiness and stupidity of a beast, when he died, most literally, "as the beast dieth." A gloom of horror spread over "the spirits in prison," such as could almost be felt, when this fellow spirit left its clay tenement. Wicked as some of the hospi-

tal attendants confessedly were, they involuntarily shrunk from the dreadful tragedy, and drew nigh to me, as if they hoped thereby to be protected from the evil spirits that seemed to "throng the air and darken heaven." Nor was I entirely free from the prevailing terror. I seemed to be treading upon the very confines of the world of lost spirits. Would to heaven that I could say this was a solitary case of the kind that I had witnessed there! Instead of this, however, the conviction forces itself upon my mind that a majority of the deaths in prison are characterized by similar hopelessness, though few, if any, are attended with such palpable exhibitions of total abandonment by the Holy Spirit.

This latter was the character of the second brother's death. He manifested, a few days before his death, some concern about his condition, and warned his surviving brother against the vices and crime which had caused his ruin. Still I could obtain no satisfactory evidence from anything he said, that he was truly penitent, or that he saw, in any considerable degree, the exceeding sinfulness of sin in general, much less of his own sins. Thus he died, nearly a year after the death of his elder brother. I would here say to my youthful reader, that but few, probably, have anything like a just conception of the appalling nature of a prison life and death. I refer especially to the life and death of disorderly and *impenitent* convicts.

Let us, for a moment, bring the matter home, and

fancy that you yourself, in a fit of passion, or in some other act of disobedience to your parents, had committed a state-prison offence, and officers of justice had you in their "iron grasp." The sheriff proceeds with his handcuffs to join you "hand in hand" with a fellow-convict, perchance a murderer, who seizes upon every opportunity to insult and torment you in the most vulgar and profane manner. As you are marched through the streets down to the boat, or some other conveyance, every eye is fixed in wonder and consternation upon you, and every ear is ready to listen to every word that may be uttered. You arrive at the Prison. The Sheriff, in delivering you over to the prison-authorities, may say something like the following: "I have brought you two very troublesome fellows; although young in years they are old in crime; and you will have to look out for them." The course of justice is necessarily so summary that by the time you enter the Prison all minor distinctions of criminality are lost; and the general character of criminals for truth and veracity being very questionable, it would be exceedingly difficult to persuade the prison authorities—if they in any wise should deem it their duty to listen to you—that you are any less criminal than your fellow-prisoner. Hence, although I wish it were, and do believe it might be otherwise, there is little or no distinction made in regard to the treatment of convicts in our penitentiaries. The contractor, under the present economy, is permitted to select and

arrange his men at their labor as may best suit his purpose. It therefore frequently happens that the junior and senior in criminality are placed side by side at the same work-bench. Under these circumstances, not only the officers and visitors, but the prisoners themselves—suffering a gradual diminution of self-respect—lose all idea of degrees in criminality, and consequently are looked upon and regard themselves as being alike degraded, abandoned and outlawed. The fact that there is one set of rules for all ; that they are all dressed in striped garments ; their cells, furniture, food, &c., are alike, tends to confound those degrees in crime upon which alone equitable penalties can be awarded, or encouragement to reform can be founded. How appalling the thought, to be thus placed among the most degraded of our depraved race, and to become at once and forever identified with, and reckoned as *one of them !* And then to know that the dark and dreary cell is to be your only place of lodgment for months and years, casts a gloomy shade over every future prospect. Locked up in your narrow, damp house, you instinctively look around, above and beneath, if happily you can find some way of escape or relief from the overwhelming sense of solitude and close confinement, but you look in vain ! Bolts, and bars, and bullets, forbid the most distant hope. You are charged, it may be falsely in part, with having broken the prison-rules ; you are seized at the command of your keeper, by some three or four of your

fellow-prisoners, and dragged, if you offer any resistance, like a bullock to the place of punishment, the more you remonstrate the more roughly perhaps are you forced to pass through the infliction. And then, again, to think of the possibility of becoming sick and being confined to the hospital : nay, I may say, the probability of this event is most appalling. There are many things connected with prison usages that superinduce disease, and render life precarious.

This arises not only from the sudden change of condition and total abstinence from all accustomed stimulants, but also from the impure air occasioned by the confinement of so many in one place. Working in a warm shop till perspiration becomes profuse, and then retiring to spend a cold night in a cell, more or less damp, is exceedingly dangerous to health. These, with many other causes that invite disease, render the prisoner's life very uncertain, much more so than if he were permitted to breathe the pure and wholesome air, and engage in the healthy employments to which he had access previous to his imprisonment. In the hospital the prisoner lies alone among a score or more of forlorn invalids. The doctor comes once a day to prescribe for him. His only nurse is a fellow-prisoner ; at night he is locked up and left to the mercy of his often vicious and unfeeling attendant. No mother is there to hear his sighing, and to respond to his calls for help ; no wife or sister to fan the fevered brow, or wipe from the pallid forehead the cold

sweat of death ; no father to console him, or to kneel by his dying couch and commend his spirit to the God that gave it. Conscious that he has forfeited all those tender mercies, he is left to the keen piercings of bitter remorse, while struggling single-handed with the "King of terrors."

And then the fearful possibility that the College of Physicians may assert its prerogative, and demand his body for dissection, may fill him with frightful apprehensions. Many a time has the dying prisoner begged of me as for his life, that I would use my influence to prevent his body being "packed up in a barrel or box, and sent to the doctors ;" and yet he knew, and all who have paid attention to the subject know, that unless the friends take charge of the body within twenty-four hours after death occurs, the College of Physicians at New York and Albany have a legal right to demand it. In addition to all this "world of woe" consequent upon a prison life and death, are the dreadful forebodings of "the life after death." The impenitent dying prisoner has no antidote against the withering effects of these dreadful presagings ; on the other hand, all his past life, his present prospects, and every thing that surrounds him, tend but to render the gloom and darkness of the future state still more gloomy and dark !

The surviving brother had been kindly permitted to visit the second one that died, two or three times during his sickness, and I think he stood by his cot

when he died. It was on the next day that he came to my office. The gloom and terror he manifested on that occasion, I shall never forget. He trembled and shook like a man afflicted with the ague. He wept incessantly, volunteering many a promise of future amendment as he spoke of the criminal life and unhappy death of his brothers. Whether he did reform or not, I am unable to say, as my connection with the prison ceased soon after this occurrence. I fear, however, that his good resolutions shared a fate similar to those formed by many a prisoner under like circumstances, namely, they were forgotten almost as soon as the occasion of them died away. The rest of the family, as near as I can ascertain, are suffering the dire effects of their father's "one glass more." I would here say, that, in my opinion, two-thirds, if not three-fourths of the inmates of our prisons, find their way to places of punishment, either directly or indirectly, through the influence of intemperance, and the associations to which it usually leads. This opinion has not been hastily formed, but is the result of close investigation. Let the youth of our happy land therefore arise in their strength, and with one voice oppose the march of this most insidious and destructive foe to the present peace and future happiness of man. Above all, let them individually shun the intoxicating bowl, and the society to which it leads, as they would shun the prison-cell and the prisoner's death.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FAMILY OF FORGERS.

The family of forgers—The mother's and son's statement—Idleness and profligacy of the father—Counterfeiting—Children educated in crime—Deaths in prison.

In the spring of 1845 there were *five* individuals *from the same family in this Prison!* the mother and daughter-in-law in the female department, and the two sons and their brother-in-law in the male department.

The presence at the same time and in the same prison of so many from one family induced me to make special efforts to obtain all available information respecting both their personal and relative history. When therefore the mother was taken sick, I requested the Matron to take down an account of her life as connected with her family, from her own mouth, which was kindly and promptly attended to; and when the son, some eight months subsequently, was near his end, I, by his request, and in the presence of his brother C., took down his account of himself and family, which, with hundreds of similar histories, I have preserved among my memoranda.

As the mother's narrative confirms the son's, and the son's the mother's, and both are in accordance

with the result of my general inquiries on the subject, I have decided to present them to the reader as a minute and circumstantial history of the beginning, progress, and usual end of this class of criminals, and of crimes.

The following is the mother's account as taken by the Matron:

M. S—— was the daughter of a respectable woman of some property in Belleville, N. J. She married at the age of eighteen, somewhat against her mother's advice. Her husband was a shoemaker, and at the period of their marriage, as well as for some time afterwards, he bore the reputation of an honest though not very industrious man. Naturally energetic and thrifty, she spared no effort from the beginning to increase the comforts and property of her family, but in proportion as she labored he shrunk from it, until in time both himself and their children became solely dependent on her efforts for support. Nor was that the worst of it, for with his idleness came other vices, from which she suffered deeply. At length, much against her wish, he removed to New-York. At this time she thinks, but is not certain, that he had never been engaged in counterfeiting. After going to the city his habits naturally became much worse. He was absent from his home a great part of the time, leaving the support of the family entirely to her. When he returned he often brought company whose presence was disgusting and frightful to her; loose women and drunken men, whose speech and actions,

secluded as she had lived, terrified her. At last, when her life had become intolerable, and their little means were so far exhausted that her utmost efforts would only procure bread for her children, all of whom were yet young, he left her altogether, and took up his abode with one of the females whom he had sometimes aken to her home, but not till he had by threats and other means driven her to pass a counterfeit note.

She had known for some time that this was his chief employment, and had remonstrated earnestly against it. Soon after his abandonment of his family, the eldest son was placed with a mechanic in the city. The other three remained with her, and as she had no longer to apprehend those visits which had formerly annoyed and terrified her, and was in the quiet receipt of her small earnings, her home began to be once more peaceful and pleasant. She hoped to be able to rear her children to honesty and industry. But she did not long enjoy this peace; for, as the boys approached the age when they might be useful to their father, she found that he lost no opportunity of instructing and winning them to his purposes. She says that this discovery overwhelmed and terrified her. She lost all confidence and hope. The whole end and aim of life seemed taken from her. All the courage with which she had endured her former trials failed her at once; for the danger seemed so imminent, and the consequences so terrible, that she felt she should

never be able to combat the former successfully or bear up under the latter.

At length she apprenticed her second son to a mechanic in New Jersey, with strict instructions not to permit him to come to the city on any account. She was most apprehensive for him, and she hoped by this means to prevent any intercourse between him and his father. As the others were yet too young to be sought by him, she trusted to some of the many chances which divert the designs of such adventurers to turn him from that of ruining his family. She says that no language can describe the anxiety and fear,—amounting to positive torture,—which she endured daily at this period.

Even the short respites obtained by her husband's imprisonment, were broken in upon by his accomplices, and the constant dread of his return to a more abandoned state than ever. A new source of pain, too, was the disgraceful notoriety which by this time had become fixed upon the name. Thus three years of her life were spent in a ceaseless struggle on her part to save herself and family from the ruin which she felt to be impending over them. But as her sons grew up and went from under her personal care and influence, she had often too much reason to doubt her success, and finally, step by step, she was compelled to the painful belief that their father had succeeded in foiling all her efforts, and had won them over to his wicked designs. Agonizing as it was to have this

conviction forced upon her, she was compelled to yield to it; and after years of such lingering and fruitless efforts, as only the faith and hopes of a mother's heart can prompt, by which efforts her own reputation and safety were endangered, as she was thus identified in place and association, as well as in name, with persons now so notorious, she abandoned her family and went home to her mother. Here she lived some time, resigned, in part, to the fate against which she had so vainly struggled, hearing occasionally fresh evidences of crime and disgrace, until two of her sons were on the eve of trial, and a third was watched for by the officers. Her mother's heart drew her, in spite of all remonstrances and regardless of all danger that could befall her, to their prison.

In her own language, she felt that she could not live without going to them. She took lodgings in the house of a woman of their acquaintance, and spent her days in visiting them and in making futile and weak efforts to procure their acquittal.

One day she had been with them from early in the morning till about eight in the evening; and under their direction gathering materials for their aid. When she entered her lodging-house its mistress was engaged with a child, which she assured her had been taken very ill since morning. As the mother had consequently been unable to leave the house and had no supplies for the Sabbath, she requested Mrs. S—— to take a two dollar note and step to a grocery near,

and procure what was necessary. She replied that although very much fatigued, she would go, and taking the note in the palm of her glove, she stepped out, made the purchases without even looking at it to ascertain its denomination, and returned. In half an hour she was arrested in the house where she had remained since her errand, and her name was S——!! The offence, therefore, in which the palpable guilt of another would probably have been visited with a penalty of two years, was in her adjudged worthy the extreme penalty of the law. She avers that neither at the time of her arrest, nor at any period of her life could she have distinguished between a counterfeit and a genuine note, unless the former had been executed in the most bungling manner.

She also avers that the occasion referred to above, when her husband compelled her to pass a note, was the only act of the kind of which she was ever guilty; and she thinks the only one besides that of which she was convicted, which she ever committed either with or without guilt, because she never received money from her family, but lived on her own earnings which for the most part were paid her in small sums by honest and respectable people.

This woman was taken sick on the 1st of August, 1845, and died on the 22d of the same month. Just before I attended her funeral in the female chapel, the Matron sent me the following account of her sickness

and death; to be used, if I deemed it best, in connection with the funeral services on the occasion.

"S—— had been subject to severe attacks for many months. She was taken to the hospital the last time on the 16th of August, and died on the 22d. She suffered very severely several days before she was taken to the hospital, but preferred remaining in her room. She was exceedingly scrupulous about giving trouble. She bore a most estimable character as a prisoner; never seeking occasion to evade the rules, never fomenting difficulties, never circulating falsehoods or saying unkind things of or to any one. We all had the kindest regard for her, and a warm sympathy in her sufferings. On her death-bed her most earnest wish was to see her sons and exhort them to virtue and honesty. Her last words were, 'Tell my boys to pray to God always, for He is good every day.' Thus she died a painful and solitary death, after a life of ceaseless labor, anxiety and suffering."

The following is her son's account:

"I was born 1814, in Bergen county, N. J., and lived at home with my father till I had reached my fifteenth year, when I was bound out to high constable Hays to learn the shoe-making business. After being here only about eighteen months, I left and went to my mother, on Long Island. My father had not lived with my mother for some time, as he was pursuing a course that she could not sanction; and she having, at that time, four children to provide for, had gone to

the Island, where she had taken a small house and went out nursing.

"I, being restless, soon left my mother and went over to my native place, where I fell in with my father and my brother Cr.

"Just before I left my business, however, my father came and called me out of the shoe-shop, handed me a roll of bank-bills with directions to hand them to him at the New York Ferry office, and although I became convinced the bills were counterfeit, I obeyed his directions; thus I was aware of the nature of my father's traffic before I went to New Jersey. After I had been some two weeks engaged with my father, I expressed to him my uneasiness about the business, but, by promises and threats, he persuaded me to stay. I soon became my father's right-hand man, and conveyed the money to the different customers formerly served by my brother.

"I found that my father had several vile women engaged in this business, for very soon after I had been fully 'introduced' to the concern, one of them came to me and handed me a package, saying, 'Take this to my mother in New York,' giving me the necessary directions. I took it, and on examination found it contained some three hundred dollars of counterfeit bills.

"Again, I was called out by the same woman, and sent to the Washington Parade Ground with what appeared to be a basket of apples, where, she said, I

would meet some customers. I, of course, knew there was counterfeit money at the bottom of the basket.

"When I arrived, a man came, and seizing my arm, asked where I was going. I told him I was looking for them; at which several persons whom I saw at once were concerned in the matter, came, when I emptied the contents of my basket on the ground and out rolled some four thousand dollars in counterfeit bills. Some of them paid in good money a fair price for their share, and some paid nothing at all.

"I had, about this time, committed to my disposal, I should think about $150,000, which I sent, by different carriers, to Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburg, and other places.

"As I was only about seventeen years of age at this time, my father took all the profits of my hazardous labor; still, the infatuation was so great that I was led on without difficulty.

"Finally, at a general meeting in New York, father decided upon my going to Canada. He had a plate on Penntownship Bank, Philadelphia. Father went with me as far as Albany, and took the plate. He left the plate there with one of his accomplices and returned to New York, and I went on to Canada, where he was to meet me in about a month. The man with whom the plate was left, took about six or eight thousand impressions from it. [That plate is at the P. Bank in Philadelphia, now.]

"I stayed in Canada till spring, when, it being so

cold, and father not coming, I returned; bringing with me from a friend of my father, in Canada, some $5,000 of the manufactured stuff, which I delivered to him in Newark, N. J. Again I went with him to Canada. He left me at Whitehall, and promised to be back in two weeks. His design was to get up (that is, to strike off from a counterfeit plate) *twenties* on the Farmers' and Mechanics' Bank, Philadelphia; *tens* on the Delaware Bank, and *fives* on the Ithaca Bank—to the amount of $5,000.

In this work, which he carried on in the woods, he and his associates were much hindered by what they termed "untoward circumstances;" hence he did not get back at the time appointed.

After they had gotten some 14,000 dollars of their counterfeits packed up, they prepared to depart through a small piece of woodland; which they attempted to do after dark, when two men way-laid, and scared them out of it, which caused them to stay two weeks longer than they had intended.

Father returned to Whitehall, and I, taking the money, went to Bergen Hill, N. J., and there met one of father's partners, and "planted" it. After a few days it was distributed to dealers in Philadelphia, Baltimore and other places. After a while my father went down there and returned with some $700, silver money, which he had received for his bad money, and immediately left for Canada, to settle with his partner there. I worked with my father till I found out all

about the men and business connected with his transactions. The last night I saw my father was in New-York, when he told me a man on a certain corner, which he named, wanted to see me. I went there, saw the man, and entered into an engagement to transact some "business" for him in Philadelphia, the nature of which he said he would explain when we got there. The next day I met the man in Philadelphia; we walked all around that day, and at night he took me to a house where he had a female partner; he took down a handkerchief with "shin-plasters" in it to the amount of four thousand dollars. This man, his brother, and myself took them to Pittsburg. We calculated to pass the whole of them while on our way to and from there, but missed our calculation somewhat, but on the whole made out, as we thought, pretty well.

This was the first adventure I had made for myself, I therefore remember it more distinctly. My father died soon after this, with, I have reason to fear, all his sins upon him.

We returned to Philadelphia and got another package of $30,000 and took them on to Baltimore, but did not do much. We came back quite poor—well-dressed—but no money. These two men had a house hired and we kept bachelors' hall; so we found it was a good time to make "shin-plasters;" and accordingly we got a press and went to work. When we found a shilling shin-plaster we would make a three dollar bill

out of it, by supplying a die. In this way we drained our institution of shilling bills.

They got me to come on to N. J. to get my press—the same probably that had been used in Canada, and bring it back to Philadelphia. We got material and printed 5000 bank bills, consisting of three dollars on Weybosset Bank, R. I. Our leader finally gave up the plate to get my brother W. out of a difficulty. I still had one plate and W. one. We wrote to Mr. G., in Canada, to come and see us. He came and brought one for two's on City Bank, Providence ; and one for three's on Farmers' and Mechanics' Bank, Vt. He gave us six hundred dollars for my plate.

The next I went to Albany, got three hundred dollars of counterfeit money, brought it back with me to New-York, and got rid of it all in about three hours. Now my brother C. S. proposed to go to Canada. I, at first, backed out, but when I saw he was determined to go, I said I would go too. I went up and struck off twenty-four hundred dollars of spurious bills. After this I started South, and got in Sheldon, Vt., where I took lodgings and laid my money under my head. Next morning I put my money in my pocket and went on two miles or so, then went in to dry my clothes. The man of the house, I perceived, looked at me rather sharply. I hired a man that was passing by to take me on the road, but after going a few hundred rods, he stopped to get his horse shod. Now the man that looked at me so sharp rode up and said, " I understand

you have counterfeit money with you." "I guess not," I said, carelessly. "Are you willing to be searched?" "Yes," I replied; and put my hand in my pocket and handed my pocket-book to him, and said it was all I had. He did not search me but arrested me and took me to St. Albans jail, where I remained four months. There was an Englishman in the same room with me and a colored man about the jail, who had been in the same room but was discharged a few days before I came in."

[Here his narrative was interrupted, *it being only the day before his death*, by exhaustion. He choked almost to suffocation—great drops of perspiration stood upon his pallid brow; and to all appearance he was near life's close. In a few moments, however, he recovered sufficiently to say:] "I sent for you to relate, as far as my weakness would allow, those incidents in my criminal life which might, I hope, be a warning to my fellow-prisoners and others. It is all I can *now* do to atone for my numerous and vile acts against society; but my weakness is so great that I cannot finish. My brother C. S. (who was present) will tell you the rest, and I will correct him if he errs." (C. S. commenced.) "My brother J. promised to give the colored man clothes and four dollars in good money, if he would contrive a plan to get him out of the jail. This colored man was in the employ of the jailor, and therefore knew where the keys were kept. He went down into the cellar, got up through the trap door,

and secured the keys—this was about twelve o'clock at night. He unlocked the door and called for brother J. to come out. The Englishman clung to J. and came out with him, and the colored man led the way. They were out only about ten minutes when they saw the sheriff coming with a couple of prisoners. The Englishman was caught that night in a swamp not far off. My brother J. was out three days and nights. As there was a considerable reward offered for him, close and constant search was made, and his pursuers came often very near him. He heard them threaten him with no mercy should they find him.

"The third morning, being in a starving condition, he ventured to come out to the highway. While sitting on the fence in his shirt sleeves, a man in a wagon came along and asked him to ride, to which he consented. The man said he was going to stop soon and take breakfast. J. said he would join him. They did so; and while eating, J. noticed several persons present gazing at him very eagerly. When he had finished they spoke to him in a way that gave him to understand that they strongly suspected him to be the man that had broken jail. They finally became so well convinced of it that he was seized and taken back. Here he remained six weeks, and then was tried, convicted, and sentenced to the penitentiary at Windsor, Vt., for four years.

"When on his way to this prison he occupied the same room at night with the sheriff's son, but contrived

to escape and crawl under the barn, where he was discovered by a peddler, who had been in their company the day before, and thus recovered by the sheriff. He was at this prison two years when he began to bleed at the lungs. The physician despaired of his life, and he thinks he could have then been pardoned had the petition from his friends reached the Legislature in time; but as it did not, he was forced to remain another year, when he was, in the spring of 1842, released by pardon. When he came to brother W.'s, in N. J., his health was very poor. From thence he went to New-York. There he got married to a young girl who died within a year after, leaving a young child. He and I were taken up soon after under the suspicion of having rollers of a copper-plate for striking off bank-note bills. These were found on the premises, any knowledge of which he denied. We were in the tombs about eight weeks, when he was released. In two or three days afterwards he came to see me and brought some things for me. He was again arrested for making silver coin, though he protests he had nothing to do with it, and we were tried and sent up here together.

"I thought the world of my brother J., frail as he was. No one knows how awful I feel when in my cell. A little before I came here was the trying time with me. I frequently tried to have some mechanic take me and learn me a trade. Every one knew that I loved to work, but my name defeated me in all my applica-

tions. What could I do other than to follow the current my family floated down upon?

"I am not here too long for my repeated offences; but O the agony of my heart. My friends dying by my side, and in prison too! Mother is gone, and brother J. dying. May Heaven have mercy upon me."

The mother of these miserable young men, themselves the victims of their father's vicious example, seconded by their own wickedness, died as above related —worn out with sufferings and sorrow. She was evidently a woman of good character, who, had she been united to a husband of like principles, might have lived happily and respectably in society, and trained their children to lead lives of virtue and usefulness. As it was, she suffered as only a wife and mother can suffer, from the vicious lives of her husband and sons, and at length was herself condemned as an offender, and subjected to bear the legal penalties of the crimes on account of which she had suffered so much in her domestic relations. Her son, whose narrative is given above, died the day following that on which he made this statement. The history of that ruined family is full of painful interest and instruction.

CHAPTER XVII.

TWO WELL-BRED BOYS.

Ministers' sons—Dr. Sprague's opinion—J. R. goes to sea—Free and easy row—In prison—Parental solicitude—Letters—Reformation—Thirteen years out of prison—A wife's letter.

THE sons of ministers, it is sometimes affirmed, are proverbially bad; and the stricter the doctrine and discipline of the parent, the more marked the aberrations of the child. But, on the other hand, in Dr. Sprague's late work we have a detailed account of one hundred ministers' families; and from this number, he tells us, the Christian ministry received into its ranks one hundred and ten of their sons; and of the remainder, by far the larger portion rose to an honorable eminence in mercantile business or the learned professions. This statement is in perfect accordance with the observation of all Christian ministers, and yet I have now to present two sketches of members of ministers' families; and, as a passing remark, I would here say, that these two form one-third of the whole number of persons from this class in life that I ever knew at the Sing Sing Prison.

The subject of this sketch was born in one of our sea-port towns, and, being a frank, open-hearted lad, he naturally enough became charmed with the sailor and the sailor's life. As a consequence, he gave his indulgent father no rest until he permitted him go to sea ; and in the occupation of a seaman he spent his time until he was twenty-four years of age. In the meantime, he married an excellent woman in a southern city, and his father having removed to the interior of this State, he did not visit home as often as formerly. He, however, often visited an elder brother who had established himself as a merchant at the south. At length, he again started for a paternal visit, and being buoyant in spirits and in company with some boon companions, he must needs have a drinking frolic before he came under the sacred influences which would cluster around him at his father's house, consequently he launched out into an unrestrained "free and easy row."

The damage done to person and property on that occasion, cost him his liberty. He was convicted of constructive grand larceny, on the 3d of February, 1843, and sentenced to the Sing Sing Prison for two years and six months. His friends being ignorant of the circumstances in which he was placed, he lost the benefit which might have accrued to him from their testimony as to his general character for honesty, up to that unfortunate period.

His manly and ingenuous appearance arrested my

attention and enlisted my sympathies at sight, and led me at the earliest opportunity to visit him at his cell. My first impressions of his susceptibility to moral culture were favorable, and they were strengthened by every succeeding visit. He attended with almost breathless interest to the services in the chapel. When the subject of religious education, in connection with "home influences" was dwelt upon, the big tears of penitential sorrow might be seen coursing down his sun-burnt cheek. At last, light broke in upon his mind, and salvation came to his heart; and a happier man than he appeared to be I scarcely ever saw. The change was noticed by convict and keeper, and, quite unconsciously to himself, he became the distinguished exemplar of the shop in which he worked.

By means which only a fond and anxious father could devise, the whereabouts of J. R. was ascertained, but not until a year of his imprisonment had passed away. The same parental solicitude that "refused to be comforted" until it ascertained where the lost son was, brought the father face to face with his sailor boy, within the dismal walls of his prison house, in May, 1844. Being on one of my visits to the families of our prisoners in New York, I did not witness the affecting interview between the father and the penitential son; but the old gentleman went to my house and related his own and his son's history to my family.

After this visit from his father, J. R. seemed to lose sight of almost everything save his duty towards God

and man. He was an intelligent, well-informed, consistent professor of Christ's religion; and in this course of piety he continued up to the day of his release. About five months previous to his release I received the following letter from his father:

O—— S——, March 20, 1845.

Rev. John Luckey:

Dear Sir,—I am so unfortunate as to have a son (J—— R——) in confinement at Sing Sing. I called to see him last May, and also called at your house to make inquiries about him, if you should chance to know anything about him, but you were absent. His term of confinement ends on the 3d of August next, I believe, and my wish is to deposit with you twenty dollars, to be given him at his liberation, that he may be enabled to go directly to join his wife and child, who are in ——. I wish to send it in the course of ten days or so, to you, as I expect to be absent from this place through the season. If you will be so kind as to consent to this agency, will you be so good as to advise me by return mail, and I will then send you a draft for the amount, and thus oblige

Yours respectfully.

I answered his letter immediately after its receipt, and with feelings almost indescribable, and received the following one in reply.

March 29, 1845.

Rev. John Luckey,

Dear Sir:—I have this morning received your kind letter of the 25th inst. and thank you for the interest you manifest for my son's welfare. Above I

send you a draft on Bank of New York, for twenty-five dollars, which you will doubtless be able to get cashed at your place, and which you had best do as soon as convenient. It is all that I am able to do for my poor boy. I am quite reduced in my circumstances, and deeply regret my inability to do more. When he is freed from his confinement, I would advise him to repair immediately to his wife and child at ——. As a sailor he can probably get a passage from New York, for little or nothing, by assisting on shipboard. If he intends to follow a sea-faring life he had best sail from a southern port if the climate should agree with his health ; and I beg and implore him to *associate* familiarly in all future time with none but religious persons. His mother, who is in feeble health, and his sister, know *nothing* of his situation, and I beg of him, if possible, never to let them know it. The grief and sorrow has been pent up in my lone bosom, until I am almost broken down ; but if the sad event terminates in his favor, I shall be content. I expect to remove in a few days to ——, where, on receipt of this, you may address a newspaper with initials of your name on the corner of the envelope, which will be a sufficient token of receipt of this. On his liberation please hand him the money, and assure him of my paternal love and blessing, and give him such advice as you may think proper. This to me is a very melancholy subject. I can say no more. My dear sir, I beg of you to send for him, and advise him as your own judgment may dictate.

Your assured friend.

The welcome day of freedom for this humbled man at last arrived. He expressed many thanks for the lenient treatment he had received from the officers,

and I heard no more of him for eight or ten days, when I received the following note from him :

N. Y., August 11, 1845.

Rev. Sir,

According to promise I now forward to you a few lines. Since I have arrived in this city I find my friends perfectly willing and ready to recognize me and treat me with more respect than it is reasonable for me to expect. My opportunities for getting into business look favorable, and as soon as I obtain some lucrative employment I will let you know. Last Sabbath I attended church at St. Pauls, in Broadway, the text was, "Thy God, thy glory." I was much edified. Please give my respects to Mr. Eldridge and Mr. Rowell. I find that the "ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are paths of peace."

Very respectfully,

J. R.

In about three months afterward I received the following letter from this redeemed man :

S. G., Nov. 13, 1845.

My dear Mr. Luckey,

I left New York on the 14th of last August for this place ; after remaining here four days, application was made to me to go as the first officer of a barque to Kingston, Jamaica. I accordingly accepted the offer made, went to Kingston, at forty dollars per month. I arrived back at S. on the 4th instant. I have now in view the command of the steam-packet C., or one of the steamers which run between here and C., at a salary of twelve hundred dollars per year ; so you see, dear brother, that all things work together for our good, if we only do what is right. I

should have written you before, but I thought it best to defer it until now. I am a member of the church in this place, and have made a number of valuable acquaintances. You will please give my respects to Mr. Eldridge and Mr. ——, clerk of the Institution. Tell them I am doing well, and wish them well. I would also very respectfully request you to give my respects and good wishes to John Will ——, who is an inmate of your Institution, and worked at rug weaving. If you please, I would be happy to have you answer this letter, so that I may know that you received it. S—— is a most beautiful city, and very healthy. Most of the inhabitants belong to some religious denomination, and I prefer residing here to any other place I ever saw. My brother is a merchant here, and very much respected by every one who knows him. Since I left your institution I have not had a desire to do wrong; and think, and know, the reformation took place within the walls of your establishment. I am the teacher of a Bible class at the Bible Association, and my encouragements to be good are very flattering, my temptations few, and I heartily thank my heavenly Father for thus dealing with me. I hope you have encouragements in your ministrations. Tell the poor unfortunate souls, the next Sunday after you receive this, to look forward to better times, and in their present situation to get religion, and it will be the safest and most substantial barque they ever trusted to. If I had the ability I would gladly relieve all the fatherless and widows, and pour the oil of consolation on the prisoner's heart. I have made endeavors to visit the prisons which have fallen in my way, and I endeavor as much as lies in my power to relieve the condition of the unfortunate and afflicted. . . . .

And now to conclude this letter, I have only to say

that I wish you well; and hope at the last great day of account to meet you in that world where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. I now, with the greatest satisfaction and holy joy, subscribe myself your ever well-wishing brother in Christ,

J. R.

P. S.—My family are in good health, and wish to be remembered to him who has often poured in the oil of consolation to my desponding and drooping heart.

J. R.

I will only add what is a fact, well known to his friends, that this once degraded and forlorn prisoner has continued from the time of his release to the present day, a term of thirteen years, to deport himself with marked consistency both as a citizen and a Christian professor.

Now, the point in this man's prison life to which I desire to call particular attention, and especially the attention of those who have the charge of our penitentiaries, is the inseparable connection he all the while held to the sympathizing heart of his pure-minded and honorable father—a father, who was forced from circumstances to keep this *big sorrow to himself*. Had he heard that his son, whom *he knew* to be the pet of his mother and sister, was treated harshly or with unnecessary severity, his heart-strings would have sundered; and in such a case, who, I ask, would have been that father's murderer? Who! but the brute who had without legitimate cause volunteered the abuse of his "brief power" upon the *son*.

The following letter, from one of the best of Christian wives, to her husband, will serve to develop the depth of the feelings the innocent relatives possess on this point :

JUNE 21st, 1858.

. . . Remember, my husband, I told you that only with my life will I relinquish my exertions for you, and I again repeat it, let it be long or short ; for sleeping or waking you are never absent from my mind. I received a very kind letter from your friend and well-wisher, H. O., in which he expresses a great desire to hear from you, and as soon as I feel able I intend to write to him ; he is in Boston at present, with his wife. Our little ones are asleep ; but I send you their love. And now, my own dear husband, I must wish you good night ; for I have been in the city all day, and you cannot think how very tired I am. Do you know that I believe that if I should hear that you had been in any way *punished*, it would either kill me or drive me mad ; because of this, I am sure you will *never deserve* it ; I therefore entreat of you to quietly submit to everything, however mortifying it may be, for my sake ; for you cannot imagine how much mortification I have suffered. I am afraid that some one will try to injure you with those who have the charge over you. I cannot get rid of this idea, it seems to haunt me. Ask Mr. G. if he will please let you write to me—tell him I entreat it as a very great favor, it is so long since you did write to me. I do not think he will have the heart to refuse. How gladly would I suffer for you ! It is true, I suffer with you ; but I would spare and shield you from all privations and suffering if I could. And now, my dear husband, once more, good night ! To His watchful

care I commit you, who neither slumbers nor sleeps, whose eyes are over all his creatures, and who is no respecter of persons. Should you be inclined to murmur, think of the deep humility of God's beloved Son, and of his sufferings for our sakes, "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again," but said, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." May it teach us to say, "Thy will, O God, not mine, be done!" Believe me as ever to remain your duly faithful wife.

R. I.

PART SECOND.

A beautiful boy—Respectably connected—Intemperate father—Dissipation—Singular pride—Crime—Imprisoned—Sickness—Penitence—Death—Mother's letter.

In the days of republican simplicity, the chief magistrate of the commonwealth paid his annual visit to the family of a near relative. He was greeted, for the first time, by the smiling countenance of a fine little boy, who was taught to call him uncle. The little fellow grew in favor with his parents and his uncle, until he became, as the sequel will show, the "idol of the family." It appears from the description given of him, that no one could gaze upon his mild blue eyes, fair skin and auburn hair, which fell in natural ringlets upon his neck, and not be fascinated with his lovely appearance. His advantages for mental and moral training during his boyhood, were more than ordinary. Pecuniary means, good society, and a healthy and fully developed *physique*, were his. I mention this latter fact as evidence that a depraved

heart, excited to action by external temptations, will lead to a sinful and criminal course in despite of healthy nerves and "a good head."

The father of this interesting boy was distinguished both for his professional skill and family connections. He prospered in business, until excessive use of fashionable liquors rendered his practice unsafe, and his authority as a parent nugatory. This misfortune had a tendency to increase the love and concern of the intelligent and pious mother for her son. But what could she do? He had already attained that age when pampered youths are inclined to regard themselves wiser than both father and mother. Under the influence of this feeling, he readily tore himself from his mother's fond embrace, and hastened to the metropolis of the Empire State. Here, unprotected by a mother's jealous eye, he was hastily ushered into that kind of society which led him at once to want and misery; so that, ere she was aware of it, this unhappy youth had "spent his substance in riotous living." Too guilty and self-willed to apply for aid to his parents, and too proud and indolent to help himself by manual labor, he fell an easy prey to the desire of criminal gain. He became a felon, not so much from a predisposition to it, as from a fancied necessity, founded on a most singular kind of pride; to which, indeed, most of our prisoners owe their incarceration. I beg leave to introduce a story in illustration of this strange propensity.

A young man who was sentenced to serve five years at hard labor in the Sing Sing Prison, was, at the close of the term, paid five dollars for overwork by the contractor. The day after his discharge he spent at my house. The next morning he came from the village, bringing with him a large and beautiful trunk. On inquiry, I found he had expended nearly all of his money for it; and, knowing that all the clothing he had was upon his back, I had some curiosity to know his object in making this purchase, which I ascertained, by inquiry and legitimate deduction, could be none other than to assume the appearance of a *travelling gentleman*, during his intended journey. He commenced his journey; but when he reached his destined place he had not a cent to pay for a night's lodging, or a meal of victuals, and hence arose a strong temptation to steal. In fact, this kind of pride, connected, as it usually is, with recklessness in regard to the future, lies at the foundation of a large share of the existing felonies.

Led on by similar propensities, the subject of our narrative committed a crime, which the Court of Sessions, held in the city of New York, on the 18th of February, 18—, pronounced to be burglary in the first degree, and for which he was sentenced to the State Prison at Sing Sing for ten years. He had been there only four years when he died. His delicate frame having been reared with so much tenderness, could not long endure the excessive toils and hardships of a

prison life. Sometime during the third year of his confinement, he was seized with hemorrhage of the lungs, which terminated his existence on the 8th of January, 18—.

A few weeks previous to his death, he informed me what his real name was, and wished me to write to his mother. On receiving this information, I consulted, as usual, the appropriate officer, respecting the propriety of complying with this request, who—recognizing in the mother a near relative of one of the first families in the State—thought I had been imposed upon; nevertheless, he gave his consent. A letter was written and forwarded according to this direction, but, through adverse circumstances, did not reach its place of destination until it was too late for the afflicted son to hear from his still more afflicted mother. The following answer was received a short time after his death:

January 6, 18—.

Rev. Sir:

I have this day received your letter, and I am fearful it is too late for this to reach you before my poor son is no more. The letter must have laid some time here, in the office; but I hasten to answer it as soon as possible, hoping it may reach you in time. The contents of your letter were unexpected and overwhelming; still it gives me the greatest comfort that I could have, under present circumstances, to hear that he has made his peace with his God. We must submit to His will! Could I be with him and minister to his wants and necessities, I feel as if I could give him up; but this

privilege is denied me. You say he has all the care and attention he can have. God grant that it is so! and let me beseech you, in the name of our Heavenly Father, to be kind to him now on his death-bed. We are all sinners, all have offended. Tell him that since he left me I have never ceased to pray for him; and in his conversion my most anxious desires have been granted. It is unnecessary to tell him how much we all love him; he knows it. He was the *idol* with us all. Tell him that he has our forgiveness and our blessing.

Tell my dear son to keep his thoughts fixed on things above, and not on things below; and then, although he is deprived of a mother's care on his death-bed, God can make his dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are. Oh, my dear son, seek God with your whole heart! He is ever ready to hear the sinner's cry. Go to him as a poor, helpless sinner, feeling your own nothingness; and pour out your soul to him in prayer. He will not cast you off. I want to write volumes to you but can only write a few lines. I am not composed enough to write at all; and when I thinkit is probably the last time I shall address you in this world, I know not what to say.

Oh my dear son, it is better to depart and be with your God, far better than to dwell in this wicked world of sin and sorrow. You will there be where the "wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest!" May God Almighty bless and be with you through the dark valley of the shadow of death, and receive you into the mansions of the blessed, where may we all meet, a family in heaven, is the prayer of your afflicted mother.

P. S.—Let me once more entreat you as a Christian, if my son is still living, to minister to his comfort.

both temporal and spiritual; and may God deal with you as you deal with him. If you will write again and give me a particular account, you will much oblige an anxious and distressed mother and friend.

Yours with respect.

To Rev. J. Luckey.

The following is the answer returned to the afflicted mother:—

Sing Sing, Jan., 18—

Dear Madam:

I am sorry to inform you that your son died on the 8th instant, of pulmonary consumption. But it relieves my own sympathies, as it will no doubt assuage the grief of his friends, to know, that he died as the righteous man dieth, desiring to depart and be with Christ. By reference to my sketch-book it is ascertained that about twelve months since he sent a request, through his keeper, for me to call upon him at his room. I found him deeply exercised in mind, which was, at first, only intimated by his presenting to me the different places in the New Testament where blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is recorded, requesting an explanation of them. When they were so explained as to leave his distorted imagination no grounds to suppose that he was guilty of that sin, his countenance at once lighted up, and he exclaimed, "Is there hope for such a sinner as I am? Why, sir, I have sinned against so much light, and with such a high hand, that for some time past I have thought there could be no mercy for such a vile wretch as I." After referring him to several passages of Scripture, showing that "with God there is plenteous redemption," I left him.

Sometime in June or July last, he discovered symptoms of the disease which ultimately terminated his life. On the 12th of November his complaint had so increased as to render it necessary for him to give up his out-door walks, and confine himself to the Hospital. While thus confined I had many conversations with him, taking notes, however, of only a few. During the greater part of this time he seemed to be laboring under a deep sense of his vileness—confessing his sins with many tears.

The following record was made in my sketch-book on the 20th of November:—(Your son) says that he finds that his confidence in God is increasing daily; that death has lost its terror; and heaven, his home, seems near.

"Dec. 1st. He said that his soul was happy in a Saviour's pardoning love, and that his joy is increasing all the time, and he longs to go where Jesus is; but wished me to pray for him, that he may be resigned to the will of God in all things!" This is the frame of mind he was favored with during all his lucid moments, quite up to the hour of his death. A few evenings previous to his death, he exhorted all the inmates of the hospital to seek God with all their hearts. While performing this duty, no ear heard him, no eye saw him, save those of his fellow prisoners and his God. On this occasion he directed his best efforts to a young man lying by his side, suffering with the same disease. This young man, who was a professed infidel, came to me on the morning of the next day, bathed in tears, and said, I have promised —— to break off my sins, and seek redemption in the blood of the Lamb. Since then he has given evidence that the exhortation of your son had its designed effect upon him.

"I went into the hospital a few moments before —— breathed his last, and while I stood looking at him he opened his eyes, and for the last time, fixing them upon me said, in a whisper, "I thank you, I thank you for your kindness. God is with me." He then calmly closed his eyes forever on terrestrial objects. Having tested the genuineness of this young man's profession at every step, I hesitate not to say that no one I ever saw gave more unequivocal evidence of a thorough change of heart than he.

Yours,

JOHN LUCKEY."

The young infidel, for whose conversion this young man manifested so much interest, was soon after released from prison, through Executive clemency; and returning to his friends in Providence, R. I., died in peace with God and man. His pious sister wrote to me that his prison Bible was, by his request, kept constantly under his pillow, and his last hours were spent in listening to its contents as read by herself, and in speaking of the joyful prospect of meeting his young friend where sickness and sorrow, pain and death, are felt and feared no more.

From the above picture of human frailty we learn that wealth, honor, education, and even religious training, are not always a sufficient barrier against the degradation and ruin of those youths who habitually indulge evil propensities, and willingly throw themselves into the ever open arms of vicious associations. But, thank God, we also learn that "the fervent, effect-

ual prayers " of pious parents may avail much, even in behalf of those who go away from the guide of their youth; and that education in the ways of righteousness often avail to the reclaiming of the depraved, and the salvation of the apparently reprobate.

CHAPTER XVIII

INTEMPERANCE.

Grief of prisoners' friends—The brothers' affecting meeting—Broken hearts—"Legal rights"—Woodruff and Brown—Temperance pledge—Permanent reform.

In the fall of 1842, Messrs. Woodruff (since member of Congress) and Brown paid a visit to the Sing Sing prison, which, on account of its happy results in procuring signers to the total abstinence pledge, will never be forgotten by many of our prisoners. Hundreds of them on leaving the prison received the certificates of membership left for them by these gentlemen, and have never returned to our charge again, save some half dozen; and the few of those who have been returned confess that their relapse into crime was solely chargeable to their having failed to keep the pledge. I doubt if the apologists for the traffic in ardent spirits have fully investigated, and carefully weighed the extent of the evil of intemperance in its connection with our unfortunate prisoners,—unfortunate, at least, so far as having contracted an almost incontrollable appetite for alcoholic drinks. They think only of the prisoner, his ostensible criminality,

and his "deserved" punishment. This is, also, the limited view that the advocates of a cruel and barbarous prison discipline take of the subject. They forget that there are other hearts besides the prisoners'—as pure and unstained by crime as their own—to be crushed in secret, on account of the intemperance, criminality, disgrace and punishment of the prisoner.

They see not, as I am daily compelled to see, in my office, the affecting meeting of parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, deploring with almost infinite agony, that disgrace to which intemperance has led their beloved kinsmen.

"Oh, brother!" said a very respectable clergyman, "oh, brother! my own dear brother! how changed your appearance! how haggard your countenance, and how painful to me your striped apparel! Your father, on hearing of your disgrace and severe lot, pined away and died. Your brother met with a like fate, and, as we suppose, from the same cause; and I have, for the same reason, been under the necessity of leaving my congregation and travelling for my health."

The prisoner, a well educated man, and naturally of a kind disposition, arose from his seat, fell upon his brother's neck, and "wept sore."

When he had sufficiently recovered from his paroxysm of grief, he replied, "Is it true, my injured but forgiving brother? Can it be so? Have I, by my reckless folly and sin, brought the gray hairs of my

honored father with sorrow to the grave; severed a brother from a dependent family circle, and consigned him to a premature grave? Good God, have mercy on me! I promise you, my dear brother, in the presence of God and the Chaplain, that I will henceforth be a reformed man." "You can and you will," said the brother, "if you will let strong drink alone. This, and this only, brought you into trouble and to this horrible place. You know not how often our brother and myself have followed you to your haunts of dissipation, begging those wretched retailers of liquid fire to sell you no more liquor; but, instead of taking pity either on you or us, they would bid us begone and interfere no more with their 'legal rights.'" "Yes, yes, you are right," returned the prisoner, "it was the intoxicating bowl, and the company to which it led, that brought this degradation and punishment upon myself, and misery upon my dear, dear friends; but when Messrs. Woodruff and Brown were here I signed the temperance pledge, and, by the help of the Almighty, I mean to keep it, and yet conduct myself in such a manner as to recover the confidence I have lost."

The prisoner, whom we shall call C., was a member of a respectable and well educated New England family, and was the only wandering sheep of the once happy little flock.

As nearly as I could ascertain from the visitor, the older brothers, as they reached their majority, ex-

changed a New England farmer's life for that of a merchant's in our enterprising city, where C. in due time joined them. For a season he was as prosperous and as much respected as any member of the firm, and, on account of his peculiarly social and generous disposition, became at once the special favorite of the family, as well as that of his out-door circle of acquaintance.

But, alas! as is too frequently the case; these attractive qualities, not being properly restrained, led him into expensive and demoralizing associations. The family perceiving this, persuaded him to go South, where, it appears, he remained long enough to form a new circle of acquaintances. While his friends at home were congratulating themselves upon the prosperity and moral reform of their dear and well beloved brother, he was becoming more than ever involved in the whirl-pool of general dissipation. The first intelligence of this blighting fact reached them in the shape of a protested note, sent from one of the city banks. C. being in want of funds to entertain his numerous "*friends*," had drawn up a note, and *merely* put his brother's name on the back of it, without his knowledge or consent, for the purpose of raising the means of indulgence, "intending," he said, as forgers generally do, "to take it up ere it reached maturity." His brother, more "to frighten him out of his course of evil doing," than to have him dealt with according to law, suffered him to be arrested and brought back to

the city, intending, after he had been, in his opinion, sufficiently alarmed, to interpose and take him out of the hands of justice. On making the attempt, however, he found it more difficult to arrest the course of criminal law than he had supposed. He was forced, after all the pleadings of which his eloquent tongue and grieved heart were capable, to see his brother handcuffed and driven off to prison. C. was convicted of forgery, and sentenced by Judge Talmadge, on the 8th of March, 1842, to the Sing Sing Prison for the term of two years. The brother against whom he sinned, and who plead in vain for his release, went from the scene of "trial and sentence" to his comfortable home only to pine away and die with grief. Just before the expiration of C.'s time I received a letter from the brother who had visited him, saying that he had procured a situation for him as an engineer, where he subsequently went and succeeded to the full satisfaction of his friends.

I met him thirteen years after his discharge; he was looking exceedingly well in every respect, and I ascertained that he was in a respectable and prosperous business.

CHAPTER XIX.

ESCAPES.

Ingenuity——Walks under water——Literary curiosity——His "tufs fusted."

If the reader will come to the Chaplain's office, which I usually designate as "No. 3 Park Row," take off your hat when you enter, by way of encouraging good manners among the convicts, and make known your desire to that effect, I will, with all the suavity I can command, wait upon you to the "stables," now called the "jobbing shop." I will then introduce to your "favorable notice" a dark complexioned, thin faced, sombre looking, middling sized young man, *tinkering* away at various jobs for the State. He is, in fact and most literally, a "Jack of all trades." If he looks up at all, you will, at once, be reminded of a scared fowl peeping out from under a currant bush, his countenance betraying an undercurrent of wrong thoughts connected with conscious guilt. A few moments' conversation with him *alone* would convince you that, while nature has endowed him with a tolerable share of practical common sense, he has sadly neglect-

ed to improve it by school education, which, allow me to say, is the case with three quarters of our men and women. Come with me to the Clerk's office, peep into the "Prison Records" and read "J——, convicted of grand larceny and sentenced to Sing Sing, February 15th, 1849, for 3 years and 1 month—discharged March 14th, 1852." Look a little farther and read "J——, convicted of burglary and sentenced, May 18th, 1853, by Judge Barculo to Sing Sing *for life*, said J——, 20 years of age, no parents, no employment." He was in the "*2nd time*" only about three months when he made the attempt to escape we are about to describe.

He must have commenced his preparations soon after his arrival. His first successful effort was to procure, of the contractor's agent, a quantity of gutta percha, and his second to manufacture it into appropriate apparatus. This he accomplished by making a water-tight coat with a hood or head-dress attached to it; in the front part of the hood a small pane of thick glass was securely fixed. From each side of the hood gutta percha horns or tubes extended upwards to the length of ten or fifteen feet. At the further end of each of these tubes, a *hollow* "decoy duck" was affixed. Thus equipped, J—— stole away to the edge of the river about two hours before "bell time," *i. e.* about two hours before they stopped work at night. Here he put a big stone in each pocket for ballast, donned his gutta percha "fixings," made them

tight around his waist and wrists, and then taking up his ducks he waded out, in a crouching posture, some two hundred feet, when he let them go. On he traveled, with the water from two to four feet above his head, breathing meanwhile *through his ducks*, which were dashing on at a "scared" rate about eight feet in his rear.

The guard, on the post nearest to him, saw the ducks making their way towards the upper dock—"and I would have shot at them," he said, "had I not been on duty, for I wanted them very much for my breakfast."

Our submarine voyager was surprised and almost confounded by the sudden interruption of free inspiration from the bursting of one of the tubes, when but about half way to his goal. He immediately threw out his ballast, and came to the surface, when, detaching one tube and preserving the other in case of cramp, he swam to the dock where he met his friend, who gave him a suit of "citizen" clothes, two dollars in money, and otherwise hastened his safe retreat.

As variety of style is generally acceptable, and as the reader may be interested in a sample of our hero's writing and composing abilities, I will close this sketch by inserting the account of his "escape" just as he presented it to me on his slate the other day. It shall, indeed, be a faithful copy, word for word, letter for letter, spelling for spelling.

"August 8, 1853. On the 8 I went to the age of the river and put my tufs in order and then waded out afout fifty yards and then med the fest of miy way for the villag when I got half way one of the tufs fusted I let go of the wates and come up to the curfes and then sunk all the aprates exet one tufe I cept by me in kase of the kramp for I had about holfe a mil to swem whe I got to the Dock I met with a man that give me a sute of close and 2 Dollers I went down to New York that nit the next day I went to se my frother he sent me in contery for a few wiks tell I cold live the contry when the time was expired I came to New York turd day I had feen in the city the Warden had information of me."

Another attempt at escaping that I shall mention, in this connection, occurred but a short time since and was completely successful.

The shavings from the "shook shop" had, for months, been deposited on the banks of the river, partly in the rear of the shed containing the finished staves. The increased quantity would, at times, suggest the poetic idea of "Alps piled on Alps." Occasionally detached masses of this enormous pile of shavings might be seen floating away with the tide—sometimes up, sometimes down, towards either bay. These facts, doubtless, like the falling of Sir Isaac's apple, suggested to *our philosopher* the means he adopted in making his escape. Be this as it may, he, being surrounded with appropriate materials, provided himself with two water-tight casks, lashed them together at each end, and secreted them among

the pile of shavings on the river's edge. When the time for his departure had come, it found him standing in the river between the two casks and two cords. Thus fairly launched, he detached about the usual quantity of shavings which he wore in lieu of his striped cap. Now he "weighed anchor" and, steering for the "Gulf stream," was soon "out at sea."

As about the same amount of shavings was frequently seen floating away in the same direction, his craft passed along unnoticed. His casks were found lashed together in the most ingenious and safe manner, but he had made his escape.

CHAPTER XX.

FALSE IMPRISONMENT—ENGLISH ROGUE.

Unfortunatec connection—Betrayal—Despondency—Gracious change —Domestic affliction—Finds friends—Return to his family.

At that critical moment when the mania of speculation had clothed the institutions of our beloved country in sackcloth; when merchants were trembling, firms failing, banks breaking, politicians quarreling, and churches waning, there landed at New York a young Englishman, with his wife and two children. He was prepossessing in his appearance and manners, and had evidently been favored with more than an ordinary education. "I came," said he, "to this free country, bringing all I held dear on earth with me, for the double purpose of avoiding the governmental and financial oppressions at home, and of taking advantage of the superior facilities which America affords, to obtain an honest livelihood. But alas! America, I found, was as much embarrassed in her financial affairs as England. The scanty means that I brought with me were wasting fast, and no situation or employment was to be found. I was a stranger in a strange land. Poverty and want began to stare me in the face. I thought of my wife and children, and wept. Thus

situated, I was ready to seize with avidity upon the first offer of a situation, which appeared at all plausible. That plausible offer, as I then thought, arrived, and I hastily and unwittingly formed a connection with men who professed to be engaged in a respectable and prosperous business. I very soon began to be suspicious of their character as business men ; but did not fully wake up to their treachery and vileness until they had clandestinely robbed me of what little I had put in the concern, fixed upon me the odium of 'English rogue,' and finally, to escape justice themselves, charged their own crime to me, and had me convicted, by turning 'states evidence.'"

This statement of his is, I presume, accredited by all who have had an opportunity to become acquainted, as the writer has, with the *manner* of his conviction at the Court of Sessions, and the interesting developments made by his subsequent history. Sometime in the fore part of the year 1838, he was sentenced to the Sing Sing Prison for four years and six months. I entered upon my duties as chaplain of that prison in the spring of the year 1839. Several months had elapsed before my attention was directed to his case, when, instead of exhibiting the characteristics of an "English rogue," I found in him a modest, retiring, broken-hearted man. His being compelled to abandon his wife and helpless children to the cold charities of strangers, and the tender mercies of those men who had so unjustly procured his imprisonment to *prevent*

their own, was evidently crushing his entire nature. Fears were entertained that he would soon become a maniac; and there is no doubt in my mind that this would have been the unhappy result, had not "the grace of God, hat bringeth salvation," interposed in his behalf at this critical moment. Through its benign influence, he became deeply penitent, and thoroughly convinced the divine reality and vast importance of experimental religion.

As I stood before the grated door of his cell, on th 6th of April, 1840, I for the first time saw the smile of joy playing upon his countenance. Is this the disconsolate stranger? thought I. A mutual pause ensued, when he, breaking the momentary silence, said, "Now I know that there is a divine reality in the religion of the Bible, and by the grace of God I am fully resolved to give my whole heart and life to Christ and his service." Many were the interesting visits I subsequently paid to that cell, and never did I leave it without being deeply impressed with the genuineness of the sentiment expressed by the poet, when he exclaimed,—

> "While bless'd with a sense of his love,
> A palace a toy would appear;
> And prisons would palaces prove,
> If Jesus would dwell with me there."

Although I made frequent inquiries respecting the general conduct of this man, I heard of nothing, either from his keeper or any of the officers, inconsistent

with the professions he made. I went to the city for the purpose of ascertaining, if possible, where and how his family was situated, but failed to obtain an interview with them, or any *positive* information respecting them. The information most to be relied upon went to say that his wife, to prevent absolute suffering, had sold what few of her personal effects remained after his trial, and with the money thus procured, returned to their friends in England. Under the conviction that the rules of the prison prohibited her communicating with her husband, (which was true up to about that date, when, thank Heaven! a more humane system was adopted,) she did not inform him of her intended departure. This prohibition, I understood, was the occasion of great grief to her ; nor did I when I returned think it best, considering his debilitated condition, to inform him of what I had heard respecting the departure of his family, fearing it would inflict a wound too severe for him to endure. Being destitute of friends who would interest themselves in procuring him a pardon, he remained his full term in prison ; and hence was discharged on the 20th of August, 1842. As I was absent from the prison at the time, he left a note informing me of his continued determination, let what would come, " to trust in God and do good," and that he would write me soon. Accordingly, in a few days the following letter was received :—

New York, Sept. 1, 1842.

Dear Sir,—I have some cause to regret that I so soon got out of prison. When I came to New York, I found strangers in my house, and my wife and children returned to Europe. I have been looking for some employment, but can get nothing to do. I have been twice into the country, and traversed some twenty or thirty miles, but without any success. I have offered to work from light to dark for my board and lodging, but would not be taken. I am now almost in a state of starvation, and what on earth to do I know not. I had a visit from a pious gentleman on Sunday last. He encouraged me by the promises of God, and prayed with me before he went away. He gave me a little money, recommended me to apply to the churches, and took his leave. May the Lord reward him a hundredfold! I have since applied, but they would do nothing for me. I am despised by the world: there is a mark on me! What on earth to do I know not. I have no friend; am penniless and homeless. I know the Lord has sanctified my affliction; and although I ought not to have been sent to prison, yet I hope it is all for the best. I have lost my character, my property, my wife and children, 'tis true; but my soul is of more value than all. I trust, if this earthly house of my tabernacle were dissolved, I have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens! The blood of Jesus Christ is able to cleanse from all sin. This is all my hope and all my plea—for me the Saviour died. I know my heart is changed; and that it is alone the grace of God that keeps me from temptation. I could not depend on my own heart: now I would only do something that would bring greater disgrace on me. I don't wonder at some people returning back to prison—the times are so hard. I think it is very

hard, after a man has spent four or five years in prison, working hard, and conducting himself so as to give satisfaction to his keepers—to be then sent out, without having any provision made for him, not even the second shirt to his back. Dear sir, I want your advice; won't you favor me with a line? I cannot stay in the city, and have no money to go to the country. I want you to ask Mr. Seymour and Mr. M'Duffie, if they would take me into the prison again until the times get something better.

I remain, dear sir, yours, &c.

Rev. John Luckey.

Immediately upon the receipt of this letter, the Agent and myself wrote a joint letter to a Christian friend in the city, directing his attention to this case, assuring him that he might rely with confidence upon the statements the unfortunate man should make to him, &c. This friend, ever true to his trust, called upon the sufferer without delay, and found him in the trying condition so graphically and ingenuously described in the foregoing letter. His immediate necessities were relieved, and a situation obtained for him with an ex-alderman, who had retired to a small farm a few miles in the country. Here the subject of our mournful narrative spent the best part of a year, constantly rising in the esteem and confidence of the humane family for whom he labored. As a proof of the confidence reposed, his employer solicited donations from a few benevolent and liberal-minded citizens, and increasing them two-fold by his own, he sent this care-worn and heart-broken exile to his father-

land, where he might be reunited with his deeply afflicted family. With many a tear of gratitude, and many a prayer for the welfare and eternal salvation of his benefactors, he embarked on board a packet-ship bound to London.

He is now probably enjoying the confidence of his early friends, the undiminished affection of his beloved family, and the numerous comforts of "sweet home." Still that degrading, withering thought, "there is a mark upon me," is ever present; nor will it cease to annoy while life remains. Reader, would you avoid the indelible "*mark?*" Then learn from the bitter experience of this young man, to form intimate acquaintance with none but the virtuous and the good. His failure in this particular formed, in my opinion, his chief, if not his only *civil* error.

CHAPTER XXI.

FALSE IMPRISONMENT—GERMAN BARBER.

German barber—His declarations of innocence—Excitement—His betrayer in prison—Developments—Unjust witness—Villanous intrigues—Suffering wife—Friends—Pardon.

"WHAT in the world is the matter with you, Hans?" exclaimed the Principal Keeper, as our German barber, pale and agitated, rushed into his office. "Are you sick. or has any one injured you?" "Noding, Captain, no sick, no hurt, no noding—me look, me see him!" "Who, Hans?" "Dat man vot do it, and I no do it. I vant but pack his shin to shave him, and he look me very sharp; it make me so fraid I knowed noding what to do, me fright so in the hend I no can shave him more; and he crack his teet so loud, and he say, 'Hans, you dell apout me, I kill you.'"

This was witnessed both by the Agent and Principal Keeper, who immediately sent him to my office with the request that I should investigate the whole affair. I did so, and the following in substance was the result.

He had been in this country only a few years. His

time had been so continually occupied in business that he had failed to make that proficiency in the English language that is generally made by his countrymen. By his industry, however, he had supported his small family and laid by in money and other property some five hundred dollars. His "frow vas one fine vomans, and no cline gall so puttier as his."

One evening, on his way home with his horse and cart, in passing —— street, in ——, his attention was suddenly arrested by a peculiar whistle. Turning his head to see whence the sound came, he beheld two men, perfect strangers, coming towards him. The larger one beckoned to him to stop, and coming up to him, asked hurriedly if he did not want a job. Hans answering affirmatively, turned his horse around and followed his employer to where his "Butter Tubs" were; when the two strangers, without loss of time, pleced the tubs on Hans' cart, sprang upon it themselves, and appeared to be in great haste. "Let me take the lines," said the tall one, "for you don't smash ahead enough to suit me," suiting his motions to his words he seized the whip and lines and began beating the horse most furiously; but, dropping them as suddenly as he had seized them, he sprang to the ground and ran with all his might. The smaller one had left the cart before and was ahead of him. Hans stopped his horse, and looking back, saw an officer as he supposed (it was so nearly dark that he could not distinguish his badge,) approaching him. The trap he had

so unconsciously sprung upon himself, appeared in all its horrors. He, rapidly as the lightning's flash, thought of his wife, his child, and the bolts and bars of a prison, should he be taken and the real rogues (as he now was convinced they were) escape. Under the phrenzy produced by this train of thought, he sprang to the ground, and ran after them, crying "Schtop dief, schtop dief." He had not gone far before he stumbled and fell, injuring himself considerably. "You are my prisoner," said the official. "No I is'ant nodder; dem rashcals vot run avey pe your prisoner. I no do nodding bad in all mine life." "Aye, so they all say when they are caught," replied the officer; "come with me to the Station House."

The officer, being young and recently appointed, was, naturally enough, ambitious to obtain renown as a "thief catcher." He accordingly hastened to march off Hans to the lower and upper courts without much ceremony, promising, however, to take his horse and cart home, and inform his wife of the particulars of his arrest. He did so, but in such a rough and indefinite way, as greatly to alarm her, and (as it was subsequently ascertained) to prepare the way for an operation much like what is called "black mail."

Hans urged the officer, again and again, to go in pursuit of the other two men, and gave him money "to pay his expenses," but at length come to suspect that "he no go arter dem vonced." It was soon ascertained, however, that he had some money, and *of course*

the "shysters" knew how to avail themselves of this 'fair game," and so were slow to look after Hans' betrayers. In short, his ignorance of criminal jurisprudence, and his wife's sympathy for him, were taken advantage of, and finally this agonized family were reduced to poverty and want, while Hans, with "high pressure" power, was driven through both courts, and sent here for ten years and three months.

There were three witnesses produced on his trial, and *it so happened* that they were *all* for the *prosecution*. The prisoner and his wife, being ignorant of the time when his final trial would take place, and that it would be important to prove his former good character, and recent manner of life, neglected this and every other preparation to meet the machinations of those whose interest it was to draw more money from them or send him to prison. These three witness were, the officer who arrested him, the son of the owner of the "butter tubs," and the servant girl. The son testified as to the ownership of the butter; the girl testified that she found the door on a jar immediately after 'the tubs" were returned, and was confident she had closed it a few minutes before, and therefore, "to the best of her knowledge and belief," the hall had been *entered* for the purpose of taking out the "tubs," though she could not be positive whether they had ever stood in the hall or not. The officer testified, at the justice's courts that on the evening of the arrest he occupied a position from which he could, unob-

served, scan all the proceedings; that the peculiar "whistle" was the first thing that aroused his suspicions; that he saw Hans drive up to the stoop of the door, and two men, in a hurried manner, transfer the tubs from the platform to the cart; that he did not fully make up his mind to the fact that the tubs had been stolen till the "tall man" seized the lines and began to drive furiously, when he immediately started in pursuit. The remainder of his statement, so far as it relates to the arrest, was in conformity with the account already given.

Justice. "What became of the other men?"

Officer. "I don't know, sir; my attention and care, being alone, were taxed to their utmost capacity in conveying this man to the station house, and since then I have failed to obtain any clue to their whereabouts; besides, I am inclined to think your Honor has the *leader* in custody."

Hans was committed; an indictment for burglary in the first degree found against him; and in a short time he was brought before the Court of Sessions for trial. Here the other two witnesses testified to neither more nor less than they did at the previous court; but the officer recollected several particulars that seemed to have *escaped* him while on the stand before. These "particulars" went to fix the impression upon the minds of the Court and Jury, that Hans drove up to the step, *aided* in loading the butter, independent of the

direction of any second person. He at the same time failed to state the fact that the horse and cart belonged to Hans. Neither did he relate how he had taken the horse to Hans' house, ascertained from his wife and sister that Hans had, by industry and frugality alone, laid up some five hundred dollars. Nor with what evident surprise and extreme agony Hans family heard the news of arrest, and in many other ways developed the moral certainty of his innocence. Neither the prosecuting attorney, Court or Jury, were informed of the state of alarm he had succeeded in keeping the family in, much to his own and his accomplices' *pecuniary advantage.*

A witness is not compelled to answer "against his own interest," is the practical rendering of the law in such case; hence the officer had a good legal conscience in not imparting on this occasion, "the whole truth," and thereby permitting this man to be sentenced to the State Prison for the term of ten years and three months.

Hans had been in prison, going from shop to shop, shaving the convicts, with downcast looks and heavy sighs, for some twelve months, when the scene recorded at the commencement of this chapter occurred, which was simply as follows:

Hans was called upon to shave some "new comers," and as he raised the chin of one of them, there was, almost instantly, a mutual recognition. Yes, oh, yes; that tall form, that fierce and anxious gaze that flashed

upon him when the reins of his horse were seized—the author of his degradation and ruin was there before him! Who can wonder at the agitation manifested; especially when the *fierce* man, grating his teeth, said, "If you say a word about it, I will be the death of you!"

True, this is only "a convict's story." It is also true that similar statements are not unfrequently made to the officers of this prison; how then came it to pass that Hans' "story" affected the prison authorities so much more favorably, as it certainly did, than that of others. The correct answer to this question cannot be given on paper. It would not be sufficient to say that "his speech betrayed him." Though much can be gathered from comparing what a convict says at one time concerning his case, with what he says at another, all he does and says must be closely examined and weighed, and these various indications collated and compared with the letters and sayings of friends, to inspire confidence in the truthfulness of our men or women.

This, we repeat, was done in Hans' case, and hence arose the general conviction that his statement was substantially true, while the story of others passed unnoticed by the experienced and discriminating officers.

He was immediately transferred to the officers' barber shop: here there was an excellent opportunity of scrutinizing his general character more minutely, the

result of which only tended to confirm the first impressions respecting the truthfulness of his statements. He was, however, rather reserved, and seldom volunteered conversation on this or any other subject.

My next visit to the friends of "my parishioners" found me knocking at the door of Hans' house. A matronly looking young female with an intelligent eye, fine countenance, and in every respect prepossessing, opened the door. When I announced my name and errand, she burst into tears, bid me a hearty welcome and invited me to be seated. The little daughter sat upon a dilapidated stool in one corner, and the sister upon a rickety chair in the other, sewing. In short, everything had, notwithstanding their tidiness, a "stripped" and wo-begone appearance.

I was not therefore surprised to hear the wife and sister confirm, so far as the facts had come under their observation, Hans' statement. They could speak the English language much more correctly and fluently than he, consequently the history of this most distressing affair as given by them, was much more intelligible. The conviction that he and his once happy family had been sacrificed to the cupidity of those whose duty it is to protect the innocent and plead the cause of the oppressed, was greatly increased and pained me exceedingly. When it was ascertained by the official, on the day he returned Hans' horse and cart, that he had two horses and carts and "money besides," the work of *draining*, they said, began.

"We are inclined to believe from what we now see and hear," said the officer, "that your husband is an industrious, honest and amiable man, but he has unfortunately got into a bad fix, and it may cost considerable to get him out; but *I'll* try hard to do it if you will back me up."

"I told him," said the faithful wife, "that I was so sure of his innocence that I was willing to part with anything and everything we had, if necessary, to have him saved from disgrace and prison."

Now came the scramble for the "spoils." Lawyers, pettifoggers, officials, all wre at Madam's service "for a small consideration;" and in the language of their victims, "dey make de case no better werry fast."

The time for Hans' final trial came, but there was no news from the runaway rogues. The said officious man was once more "a consoler" of this disconsolate family. "It has been rumored, Madam," said he, "that witnesses can be found by which the prosecutor will be able to fix the crime of *burglary* upon your husband, and if so, he will be sent to Sing Sing prison for at least ten years." "My papa go to prison! oh don't let him go, don't let him go, mamma!" cried the weeping innocent, as she clung convulsively to her mother's garment. The mother and sister wept bitterly at the sound of "Sing Sing prison," though the term "burglary" was as *Hebrew* to them; while our "consoler" continued, "You see, madam, no one can feel more interest in any case than I do in this, and I

am pursuaded if I had some fifty dollars more to distribute, *as I alone know how*, this dreadful calamity could yet be prevented." "I have only that amount left, which, however, should freely go," responded the terror-stricken wife, "had not my poor husband assured me yesterday that he had rather trust in God and run the risk of going to prison, than that his wife and child should be reduced to poverty. Sir, I can let you have no more money." "Well then," was the laconic reply, "let him go to prison and death for all I care." He did go to prison and the very verge of death, and his noble wife gradually declined in health. At the time of my visit she had the appearance of a person just recovering from a fit of sickness.

I returned and reported the results of my visit to the prison authorities. Not long after this a tall, athletic and fierce-looking convict came to my office to reveal a secret, which he said his troubled conscience refused to keep any longer. "Well, what is it?" "It is," he replied, "that Hans —— is as innocent of the crime for which he is suffering imprisonment here, as yourself or any of the officers, and *I know it;* but as it is not two years yet since the offence was committed, I shall not say anything by which those who did commit it, can be made to take his place."

All I could induce him to do, was to give a certificate to the effect that he had, while in jail with one of the guilty men, who had been arrested for another

crime, heard him boast of the ingenuity he and his comrade had exhibited in making Hans the "scape goat" of their criminality. This certificate, with a statement from the officers, and a letter from the Inspector in charge, Mr. Russell, were sent to the Governor, and I was commissioned, when I should again visit the place, to see the owner of the "butter tubs."

As I had been acquainted with that gentleman for years, and was now become deeply interested in this case, I fulfilled the mission with great pleasure. On reading Hans' statement, he seemed inclined to admit its truthfulness, and said at once, "I never believed there was a *burglary* committed, as the butter tubs never were, in my opinion, put in the hall." "How then," I inquired, "came the girl to say in court that she had, just before the tubs were taken, shut the hall door; and that the hall door was on a jar when the tubs were taken?" "If she did state that [for he, not having been subpœnaed by the prosecution, was not aware of the fact] she must have been induced to do so for the purpose of hiding her well-known negligence; for I have good reasons for being confident that the tubs were not removed from the stoop after my cartman had placed them there, until they were stolen; there was no burglary committed; I see plainly that poor Hans and his family are victimized. Anything that I can do, therefore, towards accomplishing his immediate release, I am ready to do.

This "just man" demonstrated the sincerity of his

feelings by prompt action in the right direction. He gave me a letter to the Governor, stating his convictions touching the case, and praying for Hans' immediate release, which was the same day placed in the hands of the Governor by one of the Inspectors, accompanied by suitable remarks from that gentleman. He also immediately visited Hans' disconsolate family, saw their destitute and helpless condition, assisted the heart-broken wife to get up a petition for her husband's release, and volunteered the wretched family's support until her natural protector should be released.

The petition was signed by this noble-hearted man, by his son, and several other respectable citizens, and sent to "His Excellency," and yet the pardon came not.

Weeks and even months rolled away, and still Hans, with downcast look, was silently but courteously moving among us.

During this delay some villain sent word to him by one of our guard, I think it was, that his wife had been seduced by some of those persons who had declared themselves so friendly to her during his jail calamity and trial.

"I dynt pleve em," said Hans, as his eyes seemed starting from their sockets; "de rascal, dey lie—mine frow she no do dat ting."

"Never mind, Hans," I said, "on my next visiting day I will go and see about it." Hans was right, though as nearly as I could ascertain from the deli-

cate but indignant manner she and her sister referred to the matter, that, in the midst of their hapless distress, prices had been offered for their virtue and integrity by the above-named "gentleman;" but were rejected with virtuous scorn. I subsequently learned from the gentleman who had so generously supplied them with provisions, that he gathered the same opinion respecting the insults they had been subjected to in their defenceless struggle with poverty, but believed, as I had reason to, that they came forth from the trial unhurt.

Oh, my soul! what villains there are unhung, aye, and unwhipped of justice, too. If there is a just God (and there verily is), there must be a day of future retribution.

On learning these circumstances the Inspectors were led to make renewed and more vigorous applications for his pardon. The fact that every effort, spoken of in this chapter, to procure a pardon, is referred to the Inspectors as its medium, needs a word of explanation.

It will be seen that, in a letter received from Governor Seward, the Chaplain was invited to write freely and frequently on all subjects pertaining to prison affairs. This invitation was cheerfully complied with, and especially so in reference to the moral fitness of the subjects proposed for executive clemency, and I have yet to hear that the Governor, or society generally, have had occasion to regret it.

This unrestricted correspondence on the subject of pardons continued during Governor Seward's administration; but after the change of 1843 there was placed upon the Inspector's minutes (see 35th page of minutes) the following resolution: "It is prohibited to any officer of the prison, in any manner, to interfere in applications for pardon, except it be upon the requisition of the Governor or of the Board." This rule, with slight alterations, has governed "the officers" from that day to this; hence no letter is written on the subject of pardon, no petition got up and circulated, no certificate of good conduct given, until the convict goes before the Board, is duly examined, and procures permission from the same, when he comes to the Chaplain to get the aforesaid documents drawn up. Thus sanctioned, the convicts expect the Chaplain to append his own signature to each instrument; to refuse would be to vex the convict and his friends, and, indirectly at least, to reflect upon the wisdom of the Inspectors.

It must be evident that this rule places the Chaplain in a very awkward position. Hence the delay in bringing Hans' case *fully and fairly* before the Governor.

At length the Governor was induced to write to the District Attorney, who returned, as I supposed he would, "an extremely unfavorable answer," which caused the Governor to regard the "interference of

the prison officers," in this case, as altogether gratuitous, if not positively officious.

"I cannot," said he to the Inspector who was pleading Hans' case, "pardon that man while the prosecuting attorney's letter is before me unqualified. Your sympathies, I fear, have induced you to misjudge in this case."

When this decision was reported to "the prison officers," there was a general sadness apparent upon every interested countenance, mingled, as I had a right to suppose, with suspicious glances towards the Chaplain, through whom most of the information concerning this intricate case had come.

I then, being made bold by the indirect reflection so plainly indicated, literally begged permission to be authorized by the Board to see this case prosecuted to the end. It was granted, and in less than three days I had Hans' pardon. It was procured on this wise: I went directly to one of the gentlemen who knew me best. He went with me to the Justice who had committed Hans. I named the case. He took down his book of minutes, turned to the record, and said: "The officer who arrested Hans is somewhere near." "I am glad of that," I replied, "for he is the principal witness in this case, and the very man I wish to ask a few questions, in your honor's presence, and in the presence of this open book and my friend on the right." He was called. He stood, once more, as it were, in the "witness box." The Justice called his attention

to Hans' case, and added, "you will answer, with pleasure, I presume, any question touching this case which Mr. Luckey may wish to ask." "Most certainly," was his response. With these fortunate facilities and Hans' simple account of the matter open before me, I proceeded to cross-examine the witness, much to his embarrassment, and not a little to the surprise of the justice. This witness confirmed the principal points in Hans' statement. The prominent facts elicited on this examination were—

1st. That Hans had passed the place where the "butter tubs" stood when the whistle was heard, and then, after a few words with a person who had run up to him, he turned about and placed his horse and cart opposite the platform on which the tubs stood, but gave no aid in placing the tubs on his cart, nor did he lay down his reins or leave the cart at all. The witness had not even noticed whether the hall door was "on a jar" or not.

2d. That immediately after he had taken Hans to the station house he took the horse and cart home, and ascertained that Hans had another horse and cart, and money besides. The embarrassment of the witness at this point of the investigation became so marked that I was induced to whisper to the Justice, "that will do," and he was accordingly dismissed.

"Mr. L.," said the Justice, "don't let this matter rest till you procure that poor fellow's release. I assured him I would not, and left in company with my

friend for the district attorney's office. I handed him a letter from our principal keeper, in which the reasons for believing Hans innocent were briefly given, the most prominent of which was the extreme agitation he had manifested on recognizing his betrayer. "His honor" perused it for a moment, and then, with an arrogant contempt which those only who are nominated and elected to a "post of honor" by the clandestine control of "the baser sort" are capable of manifesting, dashed it under his table. "The course of justice has been too much interfered with already by the prison officers," said this young dignitary. "They will listen to every vagabond's story who happens to interest them, and then run to the Governor and us with the case. What," continued he, addressing himself to my friend, "can they know about the merits of these cases compared with those who have all the evidence before them, and understand the law which governs evidence." By this time I was gazing at vacancy in "his honor's" back office. But this abrupt retreat on my part would not have occurred had I not known that I had "a friend at court" who would and actually did convince this confident man of the error of his judgment in less than ten minutes. At the end of about that period I was, in a subdued tone of voice, recalled. "I regret that you did not inform me at once who you were," said the attorney, "as I have often heard of you and your thoroughness in sifting these cases, though I never had the pleasure of seeing

you before. What can I do for you?" "Hear me patiently, sir," was my reply. "That I will do with pleasure." This promise he most courteously and promptly fulfilled, for which poor Hans and myself will ever be grateful.

The entire case was briefly stated without seeming materially to affect this young attorney; when, however, I came to the story of the late cross-examination of his principal witness, appealing occasionally to our mutual friend for confirmation, the emotional being of our young man was evidently stirred up, especially so when he learned from his main witness, that the horse and cart belonged to Hans, and that he was in possession of a respectable amount of other property at the time of his arrest, but was now entirely stripped of everything. "Can it be possible!" was his impassioned exclamation; "why this fellow left us to infer nothing else but that the prisoner at the bar was a worthless, destitute vagabond, whose only means of support was that of thieving; that he was the principal man in taking the butter from the hall, being in such haste that he left the door ajar, and then, procuring a cart and horse, aided in placing the stolen goods in the cart and drove violently away. Under these circumstances the jury found him guilty of burglary in the first degree, and he of course was sentenced the full extent of the law." "Yes," said I, "and three months beyond."

The Attorney commenced writing very rapidly, say-

ing at the same time, "I'll give you a letter to the Governor, Mr. L., which I have no doubt will bring the poor fellow out of limbo at once." The instant I received the letter I sprang into the cars and was in the "presence chamber" of the Governor and excellent family, by seven that evening. Knowing that he had received a "prohibitory" letter but the week before, and that this alone prevented the release of my client, I without ceremony handed him the second letter. The Governor read, smiled, and turning towards me said, "Mr. Chaplain, the day of miracles I think cannot have entirely passed away, or you could not have procured this letter." He immediately had the papers for Hans' pardon executed, and I was on my way to the prison the next morning.

It is now over three years since I presented the pardon of this truly unfortunate man to the Inspectors and officers, who at once and with glad hearts set him free; and having quite recently visited him, I speak advisedly in saying, that he and his once broken-hearted wife are now happy, respectable, industrious and prosperous.

The object in publishing this and the story given in the previous chapter, is to develope some of the many ways in which the property and liberty of, at least comparatively, innocent persons may be sacrificed to the cupidity and knavery of others, as also to demonstrate to the Legislature and Governors of our State, that without the "interference of prison officers"

such persons, having neither money nor friends, would be entirely cut off from hope in their undeserved misery.

There are now here at least two convicts whose cases I have investigated as thoroughly as I did Hans', and whom I am convinced are as free from actual guilt as was he, but in view of a prohibitory circular lately signed by Executive authority, and especially in the presence of the implied charge therein contained, I have too much respect for my character as a minister and a man of integrity, to interfere in any application for pardon.

It may also be proper for me at this point to say, that I never received a single dollar from any convict or his friends, for "interfering in any application" for pardons, or indeed for anything else. What other officers may have done in this matter, I cannot say, but as all the authorized petitions must pass through my hands, I am persuaded that the instances of corruption, if any, are very few and far between; and that those "who live by others dying" have started this ball of slander, and keep it rolling for mercenary or political purposes. Are such men prepared to meet their suffering victims at the bar of eternal Justice? Verily, the voices of their brother's groanings come up from his dark cell, saying, "Avenge me, oh God, of my adversary, and that right early." Will not "the Judge of all the earth do right?"

To illustrate the suspicions the foregoing remarks

are calculated to elicit, allow me to quote a short paragraph from a letter I received on the same day said circular was handed to me. The letter was from a son who is now, and has for several months past been my "convict assistant, to his father." I have known this convict's family for twenty-five years past, and have had a thorough conversation with the Judge who sentenced him, and of course I know much more about this case than the "legal gentleman" referred to in the quotation could possibly know. It must be remembered also, that this is but one letter out of hundreds of the same character that I am receiving monthly, so that I am constantly "posted up" on "applications for pardons," and all the circumstances attending them. These letters are all alphabetically filed away. I will now go to the "pigeon hole" marked H.; here is the letter spread open before me, and here the quotation: "You request me to ask Aunt what Lawyer —— had to say, &c. According to her statement, the substance was as follows—'Tell your brother [my convict assistant] that I am now a legislator, and shall consequently see more or less of the Governor every day. Now, for the sums of fifty dollars *cash down* and two hundred and fifty more when he is released, I will drop in occasionally and speak a good word for him." In a subsequent conversation with said convict's banker, I learned that this "legislator" made the same proposition to him, which, however, was declined. On the same day, I think it was, I re-

ceived a letter from a mother, addressed to one of our "fast young men," in which she holds forth in the following strain: "Keep up a good heart, my son, for your father has put a fifty dollar bill into the hands of Lawyer ——, and promised him more if he would pursuade the Governor to release you," &c. This letter was from Brooklyn. I have been acquainted with the Lawyer referred to for many years; I know the influence he has over the *courts* and *juries*, and know that he would of course "do the best he could for his client;" hence the public may expect, however *morally* unfit to be let out upon the community this convict may be, that his Excellency will be "persuaded" of his *legal* fitness, and grant him a pardon. Having, however acquired no moral disrelish for the polluting and demoralizing associations and practices that brought him here, during his confinement, and knowing that it was neither his moral nor legal fitness, but "money," that procures his pardon, he will not unlikely, in less than six months, be back here, and those "hireling puritans," will be among the first to lay the sin thereof —through papers and legislators—at the door of "the pardoning power," or the "laxity of discipline," or the "interference of prison authorities;" while the friendless and penniless convict, though both morally and legally fit, is left to pine away and die in prison. Did I not *know positively* that this is the natural and I may say the inevitable result of the present Executive arrangements, and were I not persuaded that these

results are the very reverse of those designed to be produced by our most excellent chief magistrate, I would most assuredly keep silent, as the restrictions referred to relieve me from much toil and no inconsiderable expense.*

* See Appendix B.

CHAPTER XXII.

TWO NOTED FORGERS—THE CONTRAST.

Monroe Edwards and O.—Their conduct in prison contrasted—Attempts to escape—Intercepted letters—Punishments—Pretentions to vast wealth—Despair—Horrible death—Good conduct of O.—Letters from pious friends—Reconciliation—Discharged by pardon.

In the spring of 1842, two noted forgers were arrested and brought to trial in the city of New York. One of these, for good and sufficient reasons, shall not be named, but I shall designate him simply by the letter O. The other was the notorious Monroe Edwards, whose bad notoriety renders any concealment in his case alike unnecessary and impossible.

In personal appearance, they were both as fine looking men as I ever saw. Their figures were imposing, and their whole bearing well calculated to deceive. They were likewise acute and far-seeing men. Edwards' imaginative faculties were unbounded, and the fancies which he consequently created, led him to speak of vast possessions, with the coolness and apparent assurance of a man who held the title-deeds for vast domains. O. was his opposite in this respect, as in many others: a man of but little fancy, he dwelt

in plain matter of fact. They were both professedly sceptical as to matters of religion—Edwards bold in his avowals, O. timid and hesitating. They were both convicted of forgery ; Edwards for forging papers on which he procured forty thousand dollars, and for which he was sentenced, by Judge Kent, to the State Prison for ten years. O. was sentenced by Judge Talmadge, one month before Edwards, to the State Prison for fifteen years. Mr. Seymour, who was then Agent of the prison, and myself visited them while they were in the Tombs. They received us respectfully and politely, but on the slightest intimation given by the Agent that our acquaintance might be somewhat protracted, each in his turn assured us that there was not the slightest probability of such an event. O.'s countenance contradicted his words ; but Edwards' whole manner betrayed no such misgivings. He seemed perfectly self-possessed, and this difference of deportment marked the whole course of their prison life. They were both put into shops to labor. Edwards was first employed in the shoe shop, but afterwards removed to the carpet shop. O. was put at carpet weaving at the commencement, and remained at it while he was in the prison.

Edwards had not been long in prison before he began to lay plans for escape. His manner and habits clearly indicated that his thoughts and energies were occupied with other subjects than his present fallen condition, or future moral welfare. His earlier move-

ments in this business may be learned from the following article from the *New York Herald* of April 16, 1843, together with the letters and "plenary power of attorney," which follow :—

ATTEMPTED ESCAPE OF THE CONVICT MONROE EDWARDS.—An attempt was made on Wednesday last, by the convict Monroe Edwards, the great forger, to make his escape from the prison at Sing Sing. His plans were well laid, but frustrated by the vigilance and watchfulness of the officers of the institution, whose suspicions were excited sometime since by circumstances which will appear in the sequel. The agent of the prison received a note from Hon. Thomas F. Marshall, member of Congress from Kentucky, one of Edwards' counsel at his trial in New York, some months since, inclosing a letter, written in pencil mark, which was dated at Sing Sing, the 2nd of January, 1843, and signed by Monroe Edwards—and which letter Mr. Marshall informed Mr. Seymour he had received through the post office. This letter of Edwards', detailing his intended operations, asking to borrow fifty dollars to enable him to carry his plans into execution, and directing Mr. Marshall to forward the money to Mr. Robert P. Shortell, who is the contractor's agent in the shoe shop in which Edwards is confined, will be found below. Besides this, Edwards had written several other letters, which he was permitted to do by the officers of the prison, upon the plea that he wanted to write on business, among which was a pretended power of attorney directed to "R. R. Willis, Esq., attorney at law, New Orleans," in which Edwards speaks of his vast possessions in Texas and other places, and various other matters and things, all calculated to fill the mind of the unsuspect-

ing and gullible with the idea that Edwards was one of the wealthiest men in all creation. These letters were undoubtedly written for effect, and to carry out the plot which he was then hatching; and being looked upon by the officers of the prison as only a continuation of his grand scheme of humbug and deception, were not mailed, but suppressed. This pretended power of attorney will be found below.

On Wednesday morning last, Mr. Powell, while on hall duty, at breakfast time, took from Edwards a letter addressed to Messrs. Seymour, McDuffie, and Van Zandt, (which will be found below,) stating that the writer, Edwards, had, for reasons specified, made up his mind to throw himself in the river. Van Zandt is the keeper in the shoe shop where Edwards works. About 5 o'clock in the afternoon, Edwards, pretending to be sick, asked leave to go to the Hospital, and was observed to go in that direction. But about the time of closing the prison, the alarm was given that a convict had jumped into the river. One convict, a black, stated that he saw the man jump into the river—that he reached a pole to him, but that he refused to take it, and went down, and that the man was Monroe Edwards. Edwards' cap was found on the string piece at the dock, in which was found the following note:

"The keeper on guard this morning took from me the letter avowing my intention. The deed is now done. M. EDWARDS.

"*To Messrs. Seymour, McDuffie and Van Zandt.*"

Upon the alarm being given, guards were stationed in every direction in and about the prison, and the river at the Dock was raked to recover the body,

if it should turn out that Edwards had actually drowned himself, which, however, was contrary to the general impression. Thorough search was made throughout the prison, and men were sent off in every direction, while the Sing Sing guard and the prison guards were kept on the watch during the night.

The next morning, about ten o'clock, Mr. Van Zandt, the keeper, thought he would examine further, and upon looking under a bench in one corner of the shop, which had not for some time been used, but which was part way boarded down at the ends and side, found, upon a board which was put up like a shelf upon cleets nailed to the siding of the bench, Mr. Monroe Edwards, stowed away as snugly as a mouse, with a nice little supply of crackers, cheese, cakes and brandy! A lot of boxes had been piled up around the bench, by some person after Edwards had been secreted. Mr. Van Zandt very soon brought the drowned man from his snug quarters, and gathering up the store of eatables, took them to the different stores in the village for identification. They were identified at various places as articles sold the day previous to Robert P. Shortell, the contractor's agent above alluded to. Shortell was thereupon arrested, and brought before Justice Charles Yoe, before whom an investigation of the case was had.

And now for Edwards' letters, which are rich, rare and racy.

The following is the letter taken from Edwards on Wednesday morning, by Mr. Powell, the keeper.

"April 5th, '43.

"GENTLEMEN:

"My life has become burdensome to me here, I can

endure it no longer. The ordinary evils of the place are so augmented at present by a painful malady, that I am fearfully admonished that my reason itself is tottering.

"Before I become a confirmed maniac, and while yet I have a lucid moment, I have resolved to throw myself into the river, and thus put an end to life and its misery.

"I am the victim of a conspiracy whose malignant persecutions have reached me even here in this dread abode, for in the last few days the Prison Doctor has made several attempts to poison me, and he has doubtless been bribed to do so by my persecutors. With these my last words I swear I am entirely innocent of the charge for which I was convicted, as well as those made against me. Heretofore I have given you but little trouble, and I hope to give you less hereafter.

"I have a solitary request to make, it is if my body is recovered, that it may be interred until such time as my family, who reside at a distance, may have time to claim it.

"I am, yours, &c.,

"M. EDWARDS.

"*To Messrs. Seymour, McDuffie and Van Zandt.*"

The following is Edwards' letter to Hon. Thomas F. Marshall, sent back by Mr. Marshall to the Agent of the prison.

"SING SING, N. Y., 2d January, 1843.

"DEAR SIR:

"The new locofoco Governor of this State is inaugurated to morrow, and it is known he will turn out every Whig in office, including the Keepers of this

prison, whose term expires on the 16th inst., and on that day they will be superseded. One of them yesterday proposed to me, that if I would give him 5,000 acres of land in Texas, and defray our joint expenses to that country, he would restore me to my liberty, and accompany me thither. I am here without a dollar, and no friend or relation nearer than Kentucky. You will, doubtless, think it strange that I should call on you for a small accommodation, when I already owe you $400, but I do this for the very reason that I will thereby the sooner be able to pay you. Thus—you remember the story of my having a colored mistress at Philadelphia. This was true, but the story about bags and clothes was not true. The girl is a very fair, almost white, quadroon, and very pretty; a voluptuous figure, and exactly such a creature as we amorous men would glory in. I kept at her lodgings a part of my effects, and amongst others, a *bijouterie* case, containing two miniatures, several rings, scarf pins, &c., and in a secret drawer, known only to myself, $6000 in bank notes. At the time of my arrest Lowns and Vox tried to induce the girl to go to New York to appear at my trial, and she wisely induced them to think she would, in order to gain time to leave the city, which she did in a few days, for an asylum in the country, where she has been so secure ever since that no one, friend or foe, could see her. Shortly after the termination of my trial, being disappointed in getting funds from the source I expected, I sent Everts to Philadelphia, telling him that the girl had a valuable case of mine containing valuables, but did not tell him about the money. He spent a week, aided by Dallas and Gilpin, and though he saw a negro man, who was formerly a slave of mine, who knew where she was, he declined to let Everts see her, telling him that he believed they were all

trying to rob me, and that they wished to use the girl in some way to aid them, but that she was within twelve miles of the city, and no white man but myself should see her. This negro fellow once saved my life, and I emancipated him. He is perfectly devoted to me, and would peril his life in a moment to serve me. Therefore, if I can get to Philadelphia, I can command the $6,000 in 48 hours after, for I will have no difficulty in finding Alice; and in her I have the utmost confidence, as I have known her intimately for five years, during the whole of which time she has been devoted to me. The reason I have not done something to pay you was simply because I could not. My poor mother, last year, very unwisely mortgaged the whole of her property to raise $3,500 for my trial. She was promised at the time as much as $10,000 if she should want it; but no sooner had my trial terminated as it did, than the mortgagee declined to advance another cent, and, unless I can pay the debt by the 1st of April, 23 negroes, a fine plantation, stock, &c., must be sold for a mere song. Hence my inability to pay you and Mr. Crittenden. The time is so brief between now and the 16th inst., 'tis literally impossible to get a remittance from Kentucky or Louisiana, and it is under these circumstances I ask you to loan me $50. With that sum I can buy a cheap suit of clothes, which are essential, and the balance will pay the way of C——e and myself to Philadelphia. Once there I can command my mother's property, and still enough to put it in my power to send C——e to Texas, and to make six or eight of those damned villains who have conspired to ruin me, smell the blue blazes of h–l. I will show them a caper they little dream of, for God knows I am certainly the victim of a conspiracy, as any man ever was, but I ask no odds if I can get my liberty. I

alone can redress all my wrongs. If you can oblige me in this matter, and to guard against any accident that might befal me, I herewith hand you an order on Benj. Gray for the amount, which he will pay at sight. The person who made the proposition to me is most anxious for its accomplishment, and he can, by virtue of his office, effect it without causing the slightest suspicion. There cannot be a doubt of its failure, if I can get enough to buy a suit of clothes, and to get an offing from the place, and so surely as I live, what I tell you can be accomplished. If you think fit to send me the amount, you can do so safely in a treasury, Va., or Balt's bank note, inclosed in a letter to me, (or if you do not choose to write) in a blank sheet, sealed and enveloped to the address of Rob't. P. Shortell, Esq., Sing Sing, New York. Mr. Shortell is a respectable citizen of the village, who, with his amiable lady, have been most kind to me, by furnishing me with flannels and other necessaries, without which I must have died this cold weather. He visits the prison almost every day, and I shall be sure to receive anything from you that comes, as he brings my letters to me the moment he gets them, and I am allowed to write here to whom I please, but only allowed pencil and paper.

"With the hope that you will find it in your breast to afford me the means of once again seeing light and liberty, I shall be in a state that may be imagined but not described till I hear from you, as you are the only loop on which I can hang a hope in the time allowed; if it were longer I could get the sum without trouble. Hoping to hear from you at the earliest convenience,

"I am, dear sir, your ob't servant,

"MONROE EDWARDS."

And here comes the "plenary power of attorney" to "R. R. Willis, Esq., attorney at law, New Orleans," which is a document in full keeping with the conduct and character of this most bold, daring, dexterous and accomplished forger and consummate villain:

"SING SING, N. Y., Nov. 19, 1842.

"MY VALUED FRIEND:—

"I last wrote you from the city, the day prior to my leaving there, and at the time I wrote that letter it was my full intention to have opened the carotid artery, but I was prevented from so doing by the unparalleled, unheard of, and unexampled tyranny of Judge Kent, who, in the exuberance of his wisdom, denied me the privilege of a week, or even a day, to arrange my business in.

"Thus circumstanced, I have no remedy but to impose upon you the task of endeavoring to bring to a close my complicated affairs. With this view I have herewith forwarded you a plenary power of attorney, and I will endeavor to give you all the information I can, without being able to have my notes, memoranda, and papers before me; and as I speak from memory only, you must make every allowance for me. My affairs in Texas, as you know, I put in the hands of McKinney, at his own solicitation, and I fear he has proved a bad agent, if not a dishonest one. Although he has not written to me for some time, his brother James sent me a copy of a letter from Robert Lowns, counsellor of law at Brazoria, in which he stated that the suits of Knight & Co., *vs.* me had been terminated in my favor, and that the suit of Dart would share the same fate. Lowns was the lawyer of Dart, and hence he may be regarded as an oracle in this case. The amount of property involved in the suits of Knight

& Co. and Dart, amounted in the aggregate to about $300,000, and consisted of upwards of two hundred negroes, worth about $1,000 dollars each, the most valuable and extensive cotton estate in all Texas, lying on the river San Bernard, and containing 4,400 acres, or a Spanish league of three miles square. In 1837, this plantation was assessed at $42,000, and I paid taxes on it at that rate. In the same neighborhood was another plantation, known by the name of the Pentacost Estate, also on the San Bernard. I bought it in 1836 for $12,000, and after I improved it it was assessed in 1837 $27,000. There was also on the same estates a valuable stock, consisting of about 1,400 head of cattle, upwards of one hundred mules and horses, besides some 30 or 40 yoke of oxen, cotton gins, mills, and in short, every fixture and implement requisite to carry on said plantations. This constitutes the most available of the property which was in contest between Knight & Co., Dart and myself. They however in their suits sequestered all of my property in that county, and the decision of the suits in my favor, of course releases all at the same time. The next most valuable of my property in Texas consists of an undivided fourth of what is called the Guerera Grant. This is a large grant of eleven leagues, or 48,800 acres. It is situated in the most populous part of the country of San Augustin, on the river Attoyae, and running into what is called the Agish Bayou settlement. This tract is owned jointly by Colonel F. Thorn, General Philip Soublett, General Samuel Houston and myself, my part being one-fourth of the whole. In 1837 it was assessed at $120,000, and so charged in my tax list, I paying on $30,000. There is next a very valuable tract of land in the county of Bostrope, lying on the Colorado river, containing a league of 4,444 acres, originally granted to

Peyton R. Splone, and by him conveyed to me in 1836. Consideration $2 per acre, $8,888. This tract is said to be now very valuable, as it is not far from the new seat of government, and in a growing and populous part of the county. The next is a half league lying on the San Jacinto, I think in Montgomery County, originally granted to Gov. James W. Robinson, and sold by him to me in 1836, consideration $5,000. This is an undivided half of a league, and I believe the Governor still holds the other half. The next is five leagues of land lying on Red River above the raft, located at Sassafras Point, and on the Sulphur Fork, and are said to be the most desirable cotton lands in that region, and upon them is several very valuable plantations. These lands were considered very valuable, and can be soon brought into market. Then I own a joint interest with Col. Thorn of Nacogdoches, eight leagues on the Angeline, Natchez, and Attoque rivers, and in addition to the above town, an undivided half of three leagues on Red River, the other part being held by a Mr. Florence of New Orleans, who lives at the corner of Campt Street and Jackson Square ; I don't recollect his first name. Also the undivided half of 22 leagues of land lying on both sides of the Trinity river, the other half being owned by James Prentiss of New Orleans, Gabriel Thompson of Point Coupiet, and the estate of Don Francisco Madiero, besides about twenty or thirty head rights, and a large amount of the Nashville Company scrip, and some government scrip that still remains unlocated. There are authenticated copies of the titles of nearly all of the above named lands in my trunks at Philadelphia, and they are all recorded properly in the different offices of record in Texas. Lewis P. Cooke, my former agent in Texas, will be able to furnish you with copies of all papers you may want. There are

also among my papers some 68 or 80 certificates of stock of the San Leon Loan Company, some deeds for lots in Houston, Brazoria, Velasco, Austin and Matagorda, all of which you can dispose of as you think fit. Some of them, I believe, are valuable. I also left in suits on Texas claims, amounting to about $46,000 dollars, chiefly upon the best men in the country, and in order to get the facts in regard to these suits, if you will call on Frederick A. Sawyer, Esq., now of New Orleans—he was formerly one of my lawyers in Texas—he can give you much information in regard to my affairs, and he can also advise you who to correspond with in Texas as an efficient agent, since it is clear to me that we will have to drop McKinney. The fact is, he has too much business of his own to attend to, to look after that of any one else.

"Leaving you to get all the information you can from the persons and sources I have named, I now proceed to those affairs nearer home.

"First,—I bought of W. P. B. Gaines in 1837, a number of building lots in the city of Mobile, and it appears upon an investigation of the title, that there was a mortgage executed by one of the former owners, under which the said lots have since been sold. Now this Gaines was the agent of Col. Nathaniel A. Weir, a very wealthy citizen of Natchez, and I am truly glad, therefore, that the titles are worthless; for as it was a full warrantee, Gaines and Weir are both liable to me for the consideration money, interest and damages. As well as I recollect, the consideration was about $45,000, and as the property has materially deteriorated in value, the forty-five thousand, with the legal interest of Alabama, 8 per cent., and 10 per cent. damages, is of more importance now than twice the property, and I wish you to take the earliest oppor-

tunity of commencing suits vs. Gains and Weir. If you will take a little trouble and find out their friends in New Orleans, you can easily find out where they are in the city, and I would greatly prefer to have them sued at New Orleans, as the proceedings under the civil law will be much more summary than in those infernal common law courts, where a suit is almost as interminable as in an English Court of Chancery—however, use your own discretion about the matter. You can get all the information of this matter by writing to any lawyer at Mobile, to examine the records there. The original deeds are with my papers at Philadelphia.

When at Havana in 1836, I bought several old Spanish grants, made by the last Governor of Louisiana, (under the Vice Regal Government,) Manual Guizo de Lamos. These were conveyed by an irrevocable power of Attorney, formally executed before a notary, and authenticated by the American Consul. Copies of the original grants accompanied the powers, and the originals are on the file in the Intendency at Havana, in the Archives of Louisiana. I paid for said land twelve thousand dollars, and at that time the purchase was said to be worth $200,000. All of these papers I left in the hands of the late Col. Bowie, and upon application to his daughter, who is his Administratrix, she will deliver them to you, together with the notes of General Hunt—papers that you will recollect were once in your hands. I afterwards left them with Bowie, and he sent them to Thomas Lewis, Esq , of Opolousas, to sue on them. The two notes, with the interest, amounts now to about $13,000. Amongst my papers at Philadelphia, is a mortgage executed to me by Samuel Williams, to secure a debt of about $6,000, on a tract of land lying near Parkersburgh, Va. I don't know anything about the value of

it; but possibly you may be able to get some information in regard to it; and there are numerous other matters and things that I cannot possibly think of at this time, that will be explained by my papers. In the absence of all notes, memoranda, &c., it is impossible for me to have everything in my mind at one time. In the above I have omitted many important things, but I will at another time inform you more fully.

Now that I have given you a relation in some sort of my affairs, a few words in regard to myself.

To a sentient, refined and educated man, a residence in this place is of course of the most humiliating and onerous character, but fortunately for myself, I am not only sustained by a large portion of that pliant philosophy that is one of my prominent characteristics, but also a goodly share of patience, a virtue that when united with perseverance, it is said, will overcome all things.

I am treated with humanity here—I may say with kindness. It is truly a hard place, but I have been a political prisoner at the Ocardado at Durango, and in the Fortress of Anahuac; and on both of those occasions, I was subjected to cruelties, compared to which this is a paradise. For three months I was imprisoned in a large Quartelle at Anahuac, in one vast apartment with near 600 miserable Mexicans, and when the late lamented Travis and myself were drawn out to be shot, even then I was as calm and unruffled as a summer's morning. The good people of the city were astounded that I should preserve so much composure, under such formidable hostilities. But if they had known that on more than a hundred occasions. on the boundless Pampas and Sierras, I had passed through appalling difficulties, they would not have been surprised. If any reliance is to be placed in the assurances of powerful friends, I shall not be here long.

You will probably be surprised to learn that in this puritanical community almost every question is settled on political considerations ; and fortunately for myself, as I am not, and never have been, a partizan, I shall at least escape the hostility of both Whigs and Locos. The elections in this State are just over, but how they have resulted I do not know. The general impression was, that the Whigs would carry the State ; and if so, I have to back me the great leader of the party, our own Harry Clay, aided by our own fellow-townsmen, Senators Crittenden and Morehead, of Ky., Hon. Josiah H. Randall of Philadelphia, and John C. Spencer and J. Prescott Hall, of this State. If the Locos succeed, I can bring into the field the old Lion of the Hermitage, Gov. Polk of Tennessee, George M. Dallas, Governor Porter, and Hon. Henry D. Gilpin of Penn., and last, though not least, Ex-President Van Buren himself, who is here on the spot. With such backers, it would be singular, indeed, if I stay here long. On both sides, they have assured me that I shall be out by the 4th of March next ; and when you take into consideration the fact, that these assurances were made unsolicited by me, it is fair to presume they will be acted up to.

The position that I occupy towards my prosecutors, and persecutors, may not be inaptly compared to an angler. After baiting his line and hooking his fish, the more certainly to secure him, he gives him the full length of the line. in order that he may exhaust himself. So with my enemies. At present they have the whole length of the line ; but the sequel will show that they will be more certainly run headlong into a net, the meshes of which will hold them irretrievably. Their triumph will be brief, and I now assure you that the month of June will not pass before they will have yielded to a power that will come upon them with the velocity of

a thunder-bolt, and the effect of an avalanche. Should I be liberated in March next, I shall visit Louisiana; and if restored to freedom, there is some consolation in the fact, that even in this region I shall not be penniless. I shall be able in 24 hours after my liberation to lay my hand on $17,000 in cash, that is so peculiarly situated, that no human being can control it but myself. In addition to that, I have $6,000 in the hands of a lady in Delaware, which is also subject to no control but mine. This may appear to you singular, as in fact it is. But the money was left in a small *bijouterie* case with the lady; and before I saw her again I was arrested, and hence did not get it. I subsequently sent my lawyer, Mr. Everts, for it; but as I had had a flirtation with the lady in question, her friends thought that I intended to summon her as a witness, and Mr. Everts was not allowed to see her. Malice and envy circulated some reports to her injury, in connexion with my name, but so far as I know, she is as pure as the icicle that hangs from Diana's temple. She is not aware of the fact that the case contains the $6000, as it is in a secret fold that cannot be found by a person who does not know it, and the case itself is of sufficient value to insure it will be kept safe, and so soon as I am at liberty I will get it immediately, if not sooner. So you see I shall have $23,000 in cash to open my battery with, and in times like the present' that sum is an important item of the sinews of war. My whole life, as you are well aware, has been one of sudden transition and singular vicissitudes, and however much it may surprise others, it will not be a matter of wonderment to me, if in four months from this time I am even more highly elevated upon the high top-gallant mast of fortune than I have ever been. In the mean time I shall resign myself to my present situation, confident that the Supreme Ruler of the

Universe will not only restore me to my rights, but mete out his just vengeance upon the heads of my enemies. I am not so good a christian as to return good for evil—but my motto is, "*bonum pro bonum, et malum pro malum.*" I fear that you will think this is a tedious letter; and in order to weary you no longer, I bring it to a close.

"With my best respects to any inquiring friends, I remain, with sentiments of the highest consideration, your friend, M. EDWARDS."

Being personally charged with the supervision of all convict correspondence, I handed over the latter paper to the Agent, with my objections to its being sent to the post office. It is unnecessary here to repeat those objections. I was fully persuaded that the whole transaction was designed to procure a favorable reply from an accomplice, and thereby procure the aid of certain dupes about the prison in accomplishing his cherished purpose. I know that if there was a human being on earth for whom he had any regard, it was his mother, who had mortgaged her small estate to pay the expenses of his trial, and was in danger of its being foreclosed at the time those letters were written in which he makes pretensions to such vast wealth. I knew also that he had read a letter from her, which passed through my hands, begging his assistance to save her property; and the fact that her urgent solicitations were not responded to, was conclusive evidence to my mind, that by far the larger portion of his wide spread and well-stocked plantations were "the baseless fabric of a vision."

The conduct and bearing of the other subject of this chapter was widely different from that of Edwards. His deportment and appearance were calm and subdued. While in chapel, or at his work, he was serious and attentive. He had no desire to be a distinguished character, but rather shrank from observation; he courted no special attention from officers or visitors. There are always in the prison certain characters who have, in some way, made themselves notorious, and great solicitude is generally manifested by visitors to see them, or have them pointed out. The gratification of this desire on the part of officers I have always considered wrong, from the fact, that one class of these characters become inflated with pride by early and marked attention, while another class recoil with vexation from the annoyance it causes them to be "the observed of all observers." It has too frequently the tendency to create the desire in the minds of less notorious criminals to become "men of mark" also; and hence they sometimes say, as one of them did to me a short time since, "Had I been as great and famous a criminal as ——, I would have equal attention paid to me by ministers, and other distinguished visitors." I had no reply for this legitimate inference, drawn from the too common practice. For myself, I can say, they are not the men I hasten to seek out as needy and hopeful subjects for moral and religious effort; my mission is first to the ignorant and friendless.

For this reason I usually wait for convicts as celebrated as were Edwards and O. to make the first approaches, unless I find qualifying circumstances in any particular case. My usual course has been to announce from the pulpit on Sabbath morning, that I would be happy to visit any room, whose occupant should convey to me a request to that effect. Soon after Edwards and O. had been received at the prison I made this announcement. O. immediately embraced the opportunity, and I as promptly responded to his invitation.

"I have," said O, "a respectable, pious, and good wife. Her parents are among the first families north. I have succeeded in keeping her ignorant of my criminality, and have no doubt she believes me innocent; but she regards me as being sceptical in my religious views; for she has often desired me to read the Bible to her, and I have as often refused to comply with her request. My profession of scepticism was not sincere, for I felt a tormenting assurance that the Bible was true; but having determined upon a course of sin and crime, and being fully aware that such a course was condemned on every page of God's book, I could not bear to read it, and therefore affected unbelief: and I honestly believe, Mr. Luckey, that my experience in this matter is the experience of a majority of that class of professed infidels who, like myself, were brought up religiously."

In a few weeks I had another call from O. The

result of this visit I find recorded in my note book, bearing date May 23d, 1843. "I am the most miserable man on earth—at least, so I feel. I want you to pray for me." Such was his language, and such I believe were his feelings. He was not a man to make exhibitions of feeling that were not real, and, therefore, promising to comply with his request, I passed on, much encouraged to hope in his case. I find no other record respecting him for nearly a year afterwards; but remember to have conversed with him and with his keeper concerning him very frequently during that period. I had, also, much pleasure in noticing his uniform seriousness in the chapel and elsewhere, and his increased attention to the preaching of the Word. The next record was made on Sabbath, May 5th, 1844, and is briefly as follows:—"O. seems much affected—says he has been a great sinner but wants to do right." The next note in my memorandum book was on the 21st of the succeeding July: "O. wishes me to call on C. G. H., Esq., and ascertain where his family is; also to call on Mr. L. C., &c. He is permitted to have books—wants a good book." This note and the reception by O. of the following letters need explanation. I had explained to the prison authorities the case of O., and some others under similar religious impressions and had obtained for them the special privilege of receiving good books from their friends—hence the note, "He is permitted to have good books."

I immediately wrote to O.'s brother, and visited the

gentleman he wished me to call upon. A few days after the last interview with O. I received the following letter from his brother, addressed to me for O. It was in reply to one I had written at O.'s request.

July 23d, 1844.

BROTHER O.:

I received a letter from the chaplain of the Sing Sing Prison, written, as he said, at your request, saying that you was anxious to see me; it will not be so that I can come at present, my health is poor, and my business is so situated that I cannot leave home. You probably have heard of mother's death; she died the 31st of March last, after a sickness of about a week. She never knew of your being in prison, as we kept it from her, thinking it would do her no good, and would only embitter her feelings and worry her in her last days. Sister Lucy and myself live on the old place at present, how long, we shall stay here I cannot tell, probably not long as we have no interest here at present. I hire the place; we feel the loss of mother very much, but we think that our loss is her gain, for we think she was prepared and had been for years to go whenever it pleased God to call for her. If we could live the life she lived, I think we might have a well grounded hope of immortality beyond the grave. Your situation is no doubt an unpleasant one, but should it be the means of leading you to repentance, it will be the most happy part of your life. There is a consolation in religion that this world cannot give nor take away. This life with all its joys and sorrows will soon have an end, and soon we must meet our Judge, and our state will be fixed for ever. This life is the time for preparation for a never ending eternity. I pray God that you may feel the importance of mak-

ing preparations for death. I hope and trust that I have found the Saviour and that I have an interest in Heaven, and I have prayed to God that he would have mercy upon you. Oh! Christ is ready, he is willing to receive us all that come unto him. Go to the Saviour and he will have mercy upon you.

I should be glad to hear from you often.

From your brother S———

About a week after the receipt of the above letter another came from Mr. L. C., and as it was highly a propriate to the circumstances in which O. was then placed, and the feelings which agitated his troubled soul, I insert it here in full. Another reason for its insertion, as also the insertion of letters breathing the same Christian spirit, not only addressed to him, but also to others, is the fact, which I wish to impress upon the public mind, that correspondence of this kind has rarely, if ever, failed in producing a serious concern in behalf of the soul's salvation, and even in those rare instances when it may have failed in this respect, it has had a highly beneficial influence otherwise. Mr. C.'s letter is as follows:

N——, July 31, 1844.

Mr. —— O——:

Dear Friend,—Rev. Mr. Luckey, your Chaplain, called upon me yesterday in accordance with your request, and said you would be very thankful for a good book to read. I am very happy to send you a copy of a view of religious system, by Wilberforce. I think you will be pleased with this book, as it will point you to the true system of religion, as the only

way of living to obtain salvation through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The other copy is the Memoir of Harlan Page. You will derive much instruction from the directions given by this good and holy man to impenitent sinners.

I was very much pleased to hear that you have conducted yourself very appropriately since you have been to Mount Pleasant. I have often thought of you, and often prayed for you, that the Lord would convince you of your sin, that you may turn unto him with full purpose of heart; and although your sins may be as scarlet they may become white as snow, or crimson as white as wool; and you may see your blessed Saviour with outstretched arms saying, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Oh the rest that Jesus gives! precious gift! Will you, my friend, accept of it? that your soul may find rest and joy that the world knows not of. Oh, I shall never forget the moment I gave my heart to my Saviour; the peace and joy I felt I cannot explain to you. He is like precious to all that believe in him. . . .

I must bring my letter to a close and bid you good bye, and I pray the Lord to have mercy on your soul; that you may henceforth live the life of the Christian that your end may be like his.

I remain your friend,

L. CROKER.

After the receipt of these letters O. remained, as might be expected, serious and manly in his deportment, industrious in his habits, and giving increased evidence of true repentance, at every return of my visits to his cell. I had obtained for him the information he was so solicitous to gain respecting his wife's residence She had gone north to reside with her mother, and

although she retained her usual affection for her husband, the doubtful position he occupied in the view of her friends, restrained her from a free communication with him. I requested Mr. C. G. H., when I called upon him at New-York, to say to Mrs. O. that she could write to me respecting her husband, and that I hoped she would do so, as it might do him good in both soul and body. Some time must have elapsed before Mr. H. had an opportunity of conveying to Mrs. O. the request I made. In the meantime, O. had found what he had been long seeking,—"the pearl of great price," and in reference to which I find in my note book the following memorandum, bearing date January 10, 1845: "O. says he is happy,—ready and willing to die if it be God's will. His eyes are full of tears." About two months after this date, his wife sent me the following letter:

"A———, March 10th, 1845.

"MR. LUCKEY,

"Sir,—I heard from Mr. O. to day through Mr. C. G. H., I wrote him a few days ago, wishing him to make inquiries of Mr. Edmonds, respecting Mr. O.'s health. I am not at all surprised at it, for I am convinced he could not bear the confinement. Mr. Luckey, I wish you would talk with the Physician of the prison respecting Mr. O.; he could tell whether Mr. O. is dangerous, and also if he thought he would live long and remain where he is. It is my intention to visit him as soon as I can leave home, and I would like to know his ideas upon the subject before I come.

I have been expecting a letter from you for several

days, and have almost come to the conclusion that you have not received mine. I hope Mr. O. has heard from me. I would not like to have him feel that I would not write him, particularly if he is sick; be kind enough to let Mr. O. know that you have heard from me. Please write as soon as you receive this, and much oblige Mrs. ——— —— O.

There were many other letters received by O.; but I do not think it proper to spread them before the public. The few I have taken this liberty with, are presented merely as specimens of that style of letter-writing, which is best calculated to keep warm the affections of the convicts for their friends, and also to lead their minds to the contemplation of those things which make for their present and future well-being.

Whatever of restraint may have been imposed upon O.'s wife, of one thing I am assured, her sincere and warm attachment to her husband caused her to regret exceedingly the opposition of her friends. For this reason she frequently requested me to "come and persuade mother to forgive O. and again be reconciled to him."

The next record I find in my note book was dated July 6th, 1845, and reads thus. "O. wishes information respecting his wife; it is all he desires to know of earthly matters. O. is a Christian."

Thus urged, both by husband and wife, I immediately set out on an embassy of reconciliation. I saw O.'s wife and little boy, and his wife's mother. A more respectable little family group I have seldom

met with. I gave them briefly the history of O.'s repentance, with the evidence he gave of reformation. They wept at its recital, and asked me to pray with them. When we arose from "kneeling before the Lord," and I was preparing to depart, the mother-in-law presented her hand to me, saying, "I thank you, Sir, for this visit and your sympathizing prayer. Please say to O. that as God has forgiven him and adopted him into his family, so we from our hearts forgive him, and are willing to receive him back again with open arms and glad hearts, if he will only continue faithful to the grace given." My heart was too full to reply, so I bowed an adieu and hastened away. I was not long in finding my way to the door of O.'s cell, where I made his heart glad with the joyful intelligence I was charged to communicate. He clapped his hands and wept for joy. In a few weeks afterward I obtained permission for him to write to his wife, and as the letter was a fair specimen of his style, I insert it here :—

SING SING, September 30th, 1845.

DEAR H.

Being once more permitted to write you I improve the opportunity with pleasure. My health is better this Fall, than it has been, although I feel afraid that the cold winds of the coming winter will bring on my cough more severely than ever. But we must trust to an allwise Providence, who orders all things right. I am willing to go when it is his will I should. There have been about twenty deaths in this place since you

were here, so you must not be surprised to hear of my being one of the number, as I sometimes feel that my time is short.

I do not wish you to come here this Fall, although I should be glad to see you. To tell you the truth, it grieves me more when I think of the trouble attending your coming than it does me good to see you; and as for your writing, I suppose you cannot, but why, I know not; could I only hear from you once a month, if it were but a few words, you know not what comfort it would give me. * * *

I have nothing to write respecting myself, only I can say, I think with a pure heart, that I take comfort in looking to Christ our Saviour: He is "all and in all" to me—my only hope—and I hope and believe it is the same with my dear wife. You have my prayers, and this is all I can do for you at present.

As ever yours, O.

By return of mail I received the following reply for him:

A——, October 9, 1845.

My Dear Husband:

I received your letter of the 30th ultimo, and was very happy to hear from you, and also to learn that you was well. The number of deaths you speak of, I saw in the papers. If God sees fit to make you one of the number, I hope you feel prepared to meet him.

My mother returned from Montreal last week; she spent about seven weeks with Maria. A—— is well; is a very good boy. He goes to school and gets along very well with his studies; he has commenced studying Latin. He made some inquiries about his father of his grandmother, she told him that when he was older he should know where he was, but she

thought he was too young yet; he was satisfied with her answer. I shall go and see him in the spring if my health permits. I think of giving up my house at that time. Where I shall locate, or what I shall do, I have not determined, but will let you know as soon as I do. It is not very probable that I shall leave A——, but may. I have eleven boarders at present, but have had very few during the summer, not enough to make it profitable.

Mr. W——, a gentleman that resides in this city, called upon me this morning to say he was going to Sing Sing, and should probably see you; if I wished to write he would take a letter to you. I therefore accepted of his kindness. He will, I presume, have the opportunity of conversing with you, and will undoubtedly call to see me when he returns. It will not be possible for me to come to Sing Sing again, this fall. There is quite a responsibility resting upon me, and in order to have all things go as they should, I must be constantly at home. You must write me as often as you are permitted.

Should you be in ill health, Mr. Luckey, I presume, will do me the favor of writing. My little boy is very well and grows finely. Should I come to see you next summer, I will endeavor to bring him with me.

Yours in haste,

Mrs. O———.

O. kept on in his quiet, respectful, industrious and religious course during the entire period of his confinement. He secured the confidence and good will of those who had the charge of him, and did not, to my knowledge, receive so much as a reprimand during the five years he remained in prison. He was discharged by pardon, and with his faithful wife and

beautiful boy, removed to the West. I have heard of no relapse into sin, nor do I expect to hear of any. May he and *his* finally gain "the long sought rest!" His reform, under God, may be attributed, to a great extent, to the letters and visits of his pious friends.

Edwards either had no such friends, or refused their kind offices, if he had. He received but one or two letters from his mother, in which there was not, to my remembrance, a word about spiritual concerns. He received no other letters to my knowledge, nor did he ask permission to write to any one else, save the "power of attorney" to his counsellor.

Not many months after the first attempt to escape, though severely punished for it, he contemplated another scheme of departure from his prison-house. He wrote an ingenious letter, which none but an accomplice could understand fully, and addressed it to some person whose name has escaped my memory, and dropped it on the floor of the shop where some visitors from the city were likely to pass, in hopes, no doubt, that they would pick it up and carry it to the Post Office. They did pick it up; but having seen him drop it they gave it to the keeper instead of the Postmaster. Thus disappointed, disgraced and punished once more, he thenceforward became sulky, and slowly pining away under his self-imposed misfortunes, he finally took his bed in the hospital and died, January 29th, 1847, gnawing his own flesh in anguish of spirit.

From the contrast here drawn between these two

persons, many important lessons may be learned. I shall, however, name but two.

First. It is for the convict himself to decide whether he shall be frequently subjected to censure and punishment, or shall pass the period for which he was sentenced enjoying the approval of his officers, and securing the esteem and good will of all. Edwards decided, so far as we may judge by his acts, in favor of the first part of this alternative; O. the latter part; and as they determined it was meted out to them.

Secondly. The importance of early religious instruction may be seen in the results of these two cases. We have no evidence whatever, either in the letters he received, or from anything he said, that he was religiously instructed in early youth. With O. we know it was otherwise. It is true, he departed for a long season from the paths of virtue, and plunged deeply into crime; but when the season for reflection was forced upon him by his imprisonment, it brought his weary spirit to the Rock that was higher than he, and at its base he found sweet repose.

The following is extracted from the Editor's Table of the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, written soon after the gloomy death of Monroe Edwards, and as it is, in every particular, confirmatory of what I have written, I take the liberty to insert it.

We passed an hour in the Sing Sing State Prison the other day; and while regarding with irresistible sympathy the wretched inmates, we could not help

thinking how little, after all, of the actual suffering of imprisonment is apparent to the visitor. The ceaseless toil, the coarse fare, the solemn silence, the averted look, the yellow-white pallor of the convict ; his narrow cell, with its scanty furniture, his hard couch ; these indeed are " visible to the naked eye." Yet do but think of the demon THOUGHT that must " eat up his heart" during the long and inconceivably dismal hours which he passes there in darkness, in silence, and alone ! Think of the tortures he must endure from the ravages of that pleasantest friend but most terrible enemy, *Imagination !* Oh, the height, the depth, the length and breadth of a sensitive captive's sorrow ! As we came away from the gloomy scene, we passed on a hill, within the domain of the guard, the Prison Potters Field, where lie, undistinguished by headstone or any other mark, the bones of those who had little else to lay there when their life of suffering was ended. There sleeps MONROE EDWARDS, whose downward fate we have marked in successive years.

We first saw him when on his trial ; a handsome, well dressed, black-whiskered, *seeming* self-possessed person, with the thin varnish of a gentleman, and an effrontery that nothing could daunt. Again we saw him, while holding court with courtezans at the door of his cell at " The Tombs," the day before he left for Sing Sing ; clad in his morning gown, with luxurious whiskers, and the manners of a pseudo prince receiving the honors of sham subjects. The next time we saw him he was clad in coarsest " felon stripe ; " his head was shaved to the skull ; his whiskers were no more ; a dark frown was on his brow ; his cheeks were pale, and his lips were compressed with an expression of remorse, rage and despair. Never shall we forget that look ! He had a little while before been endeavoring to escape, and had been punished by

fifty lashes with a cat-o'-nine-tails ; four hundred and fifty stripes on the naked back !

Once again we saw him, after the lapse of many months. Time and suffering had done their work upon him. His once erect frame was bowed ; his head was quite bald at the top, and its scanty bordering hair had become gray. And thus he gradually declined to his melancholy " west of life," until he reached his last hour ; dying in an agony of terror ; gnawing his emaciated fingers, to convince himself that he was still living ; that the appalling change from life to death had not yet taken place ! And he now sleeps in a felon's grave, with no record of his name or fate. Is not the way of the transgressor " hard ? "

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE VEILED MURDERESS.

Introductory Remarks—Parentage—Youthful Days—First Love—Forced Marriage—Domestic Misery—Forsakes her Husband—Ill treatment of Friends—Wanderings—Dissipation—Arrest for Murder—Trial—Sentence—Commutation—Conduct in Jail.

In the following sketch, I have somewhat varied from the rule I laid down for my guidance, when I began this work, as, with one or two other exceptions, the subjects have all either given evidence of their reformation, by long years of trial amidst the temptations of the world, or they are now deceased.

Nor have I, except in one or two cases, given any account of prisoners now confined here. But the peculiarities of this case removes it quite beyond ordinary rules.

With regard to the birth, parentage and education of Henrietta Robinson, I have compiled this account from the most trustworthy authorities, published soon after her offence was committed, and, though it may not be exactly correct, yet, as far as the mystery with which she still surrounds herself allows, it is as truthful a history of her as I have been able to obtain.

Henrietta Robinson, better known by the *soubriquet* of the "*Veiled Murderess*," was born in Canada East, in the year 1827, where her youthful days were spent in the possession of every luxury that wealth and refined taste could furnish. All the pains that affectionate parents and experienced teachers could confer, were bestowed on her education. At the age of sixteen she was sent to a distant institution of learning, where she remained two years. During her residence at this place, she became acquainted with an accomplished and intelligent young gentleman, whom she soon loved with the whole of her ardent and impulsive heart; but he, though wealthy and of good character, was not of so exalted a rank as her parents desired for her future husband. They therefore removed her from school, thinking that absence would be the most effectual remedy for what they called her "love-sick fancy." This separation it seems in no wise lessened her attachment, as we find that a correspondence was for some time maintained by her with her lover, to whom she was so fondly attached, that she attributes her subsequent misconduct and misery to her coerced separation from him.

About one year after her return home, she was married, notwithstanding her reiterated assurances, both to her parents and to her intended husband, that her heart was irrevocably given to another—to a young lieutenant in the British army then stationed in Canada, of an aristocratic family and great wealth.

with whom she shortly started for England. Soon after marriage she began to manifest bursts of passionate and undisciplined rage, which ultimately merged into periodical fits of insanity, to which she owes her present degradation. She remained with her husband (to whom she does not attach the least blame) three years, during which period she visited with him a considerable portion of Europe; he thinking that the excitement of travel might restrain her unhappy temper; but nothing could do so. Her dislike to him gradually turned into such disgust, that she determined to leave him and her two children and return to her parents in America. On her arrival at home she was received with such a torrent of reproaches and upbraidings that she left her father's house on the night of her arrival and threw herself, unprotected and almost without means, on the world.

At this time she was in the full bloom of womanhood, with more than an average amount of beauty and female accomplishments, of medium height, good figure, black hair and fair complexion, of dignified carriage, and winning manners and address. It does not appear, however improper may have been her conduct up to this period, that she had yet fallen from virtue.

Shortly after her leaving Canada, subsequently to the quarrel with her parents, we find her living in Troy, N. Y., under the assumed name of Henrietta Robinson, and under the (so called) protection of one

whose name shall not sully these pages. A year or two passed in this manner, when the memory of her children seems to have induced her to make an effort to break the vicious bands that held her, and to return to her husband in England. Under the influence of this feeling, she left Troy clandestinely, and reached Boston, when her evil genius in the shape of her "protector" overtook her, and fatally for herself, induced her to return with him to her late residence at Troy.

Her fall seemed now to be complete, and her case hopeless to herself. During the next few years of her life, she seems to have set at defiance all outward forms of modesty and respectability, to have become addicted to the use of intoxicating liquors, and to have completely surrendered herself to the impulses of her disposition already verging towards madness. She imagined that a conspiracy was formed to rob her of life and property. The slightest provocation was resented as an insult, and she carried pistols (which she often threatened to use) in her bosom, to protect herself from imaginary assaults. In fact, reason seems at times, to have completely deserted her, for we find her attending a dance at a low grocery kept by an Irishman called Lanagan—for the poisoning of whom she was subsequently tried—where her conduct was so improper that she was expelled from the place.

Her funds getting low, her "protector" absent, (if he had not deserted her altogether,) her mind distracted by reports that he was about to marry, seems

so completely to have driven away whatever reasoning powers she had left, that we find her absolutely wandering about the streets of Troy in her night clothes, associating with drunken rowdies, invoking the aid of the police for imaginary assaults, and acting as only a maddened woman would. Rendered desperate and perfectly reckless by treatment which she did not think was deserved, she now approached the climax of her evil deeds and unrestrained temper. The Troy papers of the 26th May, 1853, contained the following paragraph :—

Horrible double murder by poisoning!—The upper part of the city was thrown into a state of great excitement yesterday, by the startling report that two persons had been poisoned, and that both would probably die from the effects. Before seven o'clock, P. M., the truth was partially realized by the death of one of the victims, and at an early hour this morning by the death of the other. The supposed murderess, a Mrs. Robinson, who undoubtedly flourishes under an alias, was during the evening arrested in the street, near the Mansion House, by officers Sayles and Burns, night policemen, and committed to jail. Coroner Boutecou was soon after called, and an inquest held over the man, and after taking some testimony, adjourned until this morning. We were unable to get the evidence before the Coroner, as the jury have not, as yet, rendered their verdict. The stomachs of the deceased persons have been taken charge of by him for analyzation. We give the particulars of the affair as near as we have ascertained them. We learn that the supposed murderess, Mrs. Robinson, had been in and out of the grocery of Mr Lanagan, the murdered

man, a number of times during yesterday, and in the forenoon wanted to borrow some money. She was refused and left, but returned in the afternoon, when she was evidently laboring under the effects of strong drink.

About one o'clock she called at the grocery for the last time, and asked for some beer. Lanagan's wife brought it into the back room, with two tumblers. Mrs. Robinson then asked for some white sugar, which was supplied in a saucer. She took the saucer and walked across the room a number of times, and then poured out the beer into the tumblers, and put the sugar into it. She invited those present to drink. Timothy Lanagan and the murdered girl, Catharine Lubee, both partook of the beverage—Mrs. Lanagan refused. The girl remarked immediately after drinking it, that it did not taste good, and asked the woman, Robinson, what she had put into it. "Nothing but what will do you good; do not spit it out." The girl was soon after taken sick, and died at five o'clock this morning. The man died at the hour above mentioned. He left his store to go down street soon after drinking the fatal draught, was taken ill on the way, but managed to get back home, where he soon breathed his last.

Timothy Lanagan kept a grocery store on the corner of River and Rensselaer Streets, was 37 years of age, and has left a wife and four small children. The girl, Catharine Lubee, was unmarried, and aged about 25 years. She resided in Albany, but had been on a visit here some weeks. Her acquaintance with Mrs. Robinson, who pretended to be her friend, had been short. We learn, also, that no quarrel had existed between Mrs. Robinson and Lanagan, except some slight words that had passed on his refusing to give her liquor on a previous occasion. Mrs. Robinson,

alias ———, the supposed murderess, lived nearly opposite Lanagan's, in a cottage adjoining the residence of O. Boutwell, Esq , on the North. She is 25 or 30 years of age, good looking, and has a foreign air. She claims to be French, but is undoubtedly English by birth. Her manner of late has attracted the attention of the neighborhood. She has manifested an ungovernable spirit, resisting all efforts to restrain her, and has frequently threatened to use her revolvers, with which she is supplied. Her house was well furnished, and she has been reported as having plenty of money, until within a short time. Since her imprisonment last night, she appears rather excited, and does not seem to realize her situation. She was searched after her arrest, and her pistols taken from her, as it was thought she might commit suicide.

During her long confinement in jail previous to her trial, she did not seem to have comprehended her awful situation. She was continually impressed with the old ideas that she was in danger of violence, and that she was the victim of a political conspiracy. One of her wild notions was, that two persons, a man and a woman, entered her cell in the night, heated a cauldron of water, and gave her the option of getting in herself, or of being put in by violence, and boiled to death. While telling this circumstance with a wild, frightened look, to a friend who was visiting her, she suddenly stopped short and referring to her dress, said, "Don't I look shabbily." She made an unsuccessful effort to destroy herself by taking vitriol, and also played the following trick upon the grand jury.

We copy the account of it from the *Times* of April 27th :—

"*The Grand Jury sold!*—As usual, the grand jury at the close of the sessions to-day, visited the jail, for the purpose of seeing its inmates.

They visited the different departments, and found every thing clean and in good order. Finally, the jailor, Mr. Hegeman, offered to conduct them to the room of Mrs. Robinson, in compliance with their particular request, as each one of them was very anxious to see her. The door was opened, and the grand jury with much dignity walked in. They surrounded a large rocking chair in which she sat closely veiled. Some of them very politely requested her to withdraw it; she made no response whatever, but sat perfectly silent and motionless. Their anxiety was so great, that they requested the jailor to remove the veil, which he respectfully declined to do. Finally, one of the jury stepped up and removed it himself, when to their great surprise, no Mrs. Robinson was there; but on the contrary a silk dress, neatly stuffed, after the latest Parisian fashion! The bird had flown—where? The jailor was asked if she had escaped. Search was instantly made. A slight titter at length was heard proceeding from under the bed. The curtain was raised, and there she lay, so full of laughter that she could hardly contain herself.

Between the time the crime was committed and the day of trial, the newspapers teemed with curious and contradictory stories about her birth and parentage. The absorbing question in every-one's mouth was, "Who is she?" Whole sheets were written, some

attempting to prove one thing and some another. Indeed, so much was written and said on the subject, and so long a period has elapsed since, that I prefer leaving the matter as it was; merely adding that whoever are her relatives, we hope that in their day of tribulation they may find a firmer Friend and greater mercy than any of them have proved to this poor fallen one.

After considerable delay, the day of trial was at length appointed. On Monday, the 22d day of May, 1854, the trial commenced before a full bench and with a great array of counsel on both sides.

The prisoner, most magnificently attired, was brought into court by the Sheriff, and accommodated with a seat near her counsel. After the jury was impannelled, the District Attorney rose and opened the case on the part of the people, with a brief outline of the testimony he proposed to offer.

The physician of the poisoned man testified to the facts attending his brief illness, and gave it as his settled conviction that his death was caused by poison: and another physician who saw the patient just before his death, and also attended the *post mortem* examination, declared that he was "satisfied that death was caused by mineral poison." The wife of the deceased detailed the particulars of the affair, which will be given in her own words.

On the 25th of May, about 6 o'clock in the morning, she came to the grocery for a quart of beer and some

crackers. She came again about 8 o'clock. She had sent a man called Haley (who was her gardener), to borrow $2 for her, and came to see what detained him. I told her that I had no money in the house, and thought of sending to borrow it. She replied she "was sorry I was so short and would to-morrow lend me $100. She then went away, but returned about 11 o'clock and told me that she had received a telegraphic dispatch informing her that Robinson was hurt on the cars. She went into the kitchen, a lot of men were there. I soon heard her quarrelling with them and went in to advise her to go home. After a short time she left. I saw her again about 1 o'clock, she came into the kitchen, where myself, Lanagan and Catharine Lubee were at dinner. She took the egg and eat it while I peeled a potato for her. She then said that Catharine and I must have a glass of beer with her. We answered that we did not like beer, when she said she would put some sugar into it to make it good. I took a saucer and fetched from the store some white powdered sugar and then went for the beer, which I poured into two glasses. When I came back, she was walking about the room with the sugar in her hand. I did not have beer enough to fill both glasses, so Mrs. Robinson sent me for more ; when I returned she was putting sugar into the tumblers, and I filled up the glasses with beer. As I sat down to my glass, the other one was placed before Catharine. I noticed a little foam on the surface of the beer, which I thought might be dust from the sugar, so I took a spoon and was going to skim it off, when Mrs. Robinson took the spoon out of my hand and said, "Don't you do so—that is the best of it." At this moment my husband called me, and I went into the grocery, leaving my beer untouched. Then my husband went into the kitchen and I turned

round and saw he was drinking my beer. I don't know that Mrs. Robinson drank any. Soon after this she went away. When she was eating the egg I saw a white paper in her hand. A short time elapsed when Catharine asked Lanagan how he felt after taking the beer; he replied he did not feel very comfortable. Mrs. Robinson came again. Catharine was laid on a bed in the kitchen very sick. Mrs. Robinson went to her and asked her how she felt; she said, very poorly; you have put something into the beer and it made me sick. About 3 o'clock my husband came back very sick and could hardly speak; he said "Run for the doctor, I am done for." I turned round to Mrs. Robinson, who was standing near, and said, "What have you done? you have killed the father of my children." She answered, "No, I have done no such thing." She then attempted to speak with him; but I prevented her. Lanagan's mother came in now and assisted me to put her out of doors. She did not come back again, but sent by Haley that I was to go and see her. I refused to go.

During the examination of this witness the prisoner was closely shrouded in her veil so that she could not be easily identified. An attempt was made to induce her to remove her veil, but she would not. Several times during the trial similar scenes occurred, the prisoner firmly resisting all attempts to remove the blue veil, and even when compelled to do so by the court, she contrived by her hands or in some other way, as effectually to screen her face as if the veil were still before it.

A druggist testified that she purchased two ounces of arsenic at his store between the 10th and 25th of May,

1853. She was also at his store about half an hour previous to her arrest, when she told him she had been charged with poisoning two people; she was very much excited and said the charge was made out of revenge. She told him she was very much in fear of the neighbors. He recommended her to apply to the chief of police. She had a revolver with her, one barrel of which, at least, was loaded. It was so rusty that he doubted whether it would go off. She was also at his store, with her pistol, on the Saturday night previous to her arrest. She said she wanted the arsenic to kill rats; this was stated voluntarily on her part. He thought she purchased it within two or three days of the 10th of May. An hour after purchasing it, she called again and appeared very much excited. The last time she called at his store, she seemed fearful and restless, and did not appear like the same woman either in dress or manner. She was very nervous and continually moving about the store. He noticed her in a similar state once before, when he saw the muzzle of a revolver sticking out of her dress. On this Saturday night, he had no doubt she was laboring under the effects of liquor. He could not say she was in liquor on the 25th, other reasons might have caused her excitement.

The officer who arrested Mrs. Robinson testified that he found two revolvers on her. And on searching the house found some arsenic under a carpet which was tacked down to the floor, and some jewelry, a watch

and a locket. On her way to the jail, she joked and laughed, but made no allusion to the murder.

The coroner, who was also a physician, gave an account of the inquest and *post mortem* examination. He testified that arsenic was found in the stomachs of both the deceased persons in sufficient quantities to produce death. As to the appearance and manner of the prisoner he added :

There was a strange, wild, unnatural appearance of the eye. She laughed a good deal at times, and her answers to questions were not pertinent. I saw her frequently after this and was always impressed with the idea that she was not sane. Once I charged her with the crime. She seemed to take no notice of what I had said, but chattered on with the same incoherent jumble as before. I do not think she comprehended what I said. On my first visit to Mrs. Robinson in jail, I said, I have come to search you. She elevated her hands so as to facilitate the search. One reason why I believed her to be insane was the wild, unnatural expression of her eyes, and the strange, unnatural expression of her countenance. At our first interview I came to the conclusion that she was irrational. When I told her that she had poisoned these people, I thought it strange it did not affect her in some way. I thought it queer, she did not say something one way or another.

Her counsel at the trial demanded her acquittal on the ground of insanity. Her jailer, who was also a physician, testified respecting her conduct while in prison, and gave it as his settled opinion that she was of "insane mind." Other witnesses were examined

and a great amount of testimony produced, all showing that her manners had for a long time been such as to lead those who knew her to account her insane.

The pleading was begun by *Martin J. Townsend*, Esq., on behalf of the prisoner. He began by paying a compliment to the ability of the opposing counsel, and added, "Not only on this account, but from the fact that the defence of insanity was looked on with suspicion, he felt considerably embarrassed. "He then referred to the comments made against the prisoner by the newspapers of Albany, and the prejudice that existed by their connecting her with the political and private fortunes of a celebrated person, whose name had been reluctantly brought forward during the trial, in bitter and scathing language. As to the question of insanity, he said the prosecution had not attempted to produce a particle of *evidence* to prove she was sane and you, gentlemen, "are soon to decide *according to the evidence.*" He dwelt upon the excitement that prevailed and the mysterious and unaccountable conduct of the prisoner even during her trial. On the 8th of December last, I examined with attention the evidence taken before the coroner's jury, and found that no cause of enmity existed between Lanagan and the prisoner, and that Miss Lubee sat at the table during the time Mrs. Robinson was alleged to have put the poison in the sugar. Then I was driven to the irresistible conclusion that the story was absurd. How could she put the arsenic in before the

eyes of this girl? "No gentlemen, I have stated that I should express fearlessly what I had to say, and now I have no hesitation in declaring it to be my deliberate judgment, founded upon her own evidence, that it is far more probable, that Mrs. Lanagan herself poisoned that beer than the prisoner at the bar." If we believe her evidence, she herself consented to take a friendly glass with Mrs. Robinson. Why did she fill only *two* glasses if all were going to drink, when as she asserts three had consented to drink together. She retired from the kitchen, leaving only two glasses there. Her husband happened in then, and what must have been her surprise when she saw him drinking the fatal draught that had been prepared for another. I do not charge Mrs. Lanagan with this crime, but in order to acquit her of all suspicion it is necessary to prove Mrs. Robinson insane."

He then reverted to the point that there was no motive on the part of the prisoner, and went into the question of her insanity, contending that it was real, not feigned. In this poor woman's case, all her hopes were centered in ———. For him she sacrificed her virtue, her honor, her all, and then imagined she was to be cast away a worthless, dishonored thing. Is not this a sufficient cause for insanity? There is not a woman on God's footstool who would not have lost her reason under similar circumstances. After referring to the question of intoxication and some other

points, he concluded an address which occupied him five hours in its delivery.

As Mr. Townsend sat down, the prisoner leaned forward and whispered to him the following equivocal compliment, "A very able speech, Mr. Townsend, but you might have said all that was necessary in fifteen minutes. The idea of my insanity is absurd."

Mr. *Van Santvoord* for the people rose and said, he supposed that the plea of insanity would be the only ground of defence; the idea that any one else perpetrated the crime was absurd, for the irresistible evidence was that the prisoner poisoned Lanagan and Lubee. As a motive for the crime he referred to the quarrel at the time of the dance, and the refusal of Mrs. Lanagan to lend her two dollars. This to a woman of her reckless and depraved nature, of violent temper and turbulent disposition, would be a sufficient motive for the crime.

After reviewing the testimony against the prisoner, he said that there was such a thing as a moral certainty as well as a mathematical calculation. The blood of the murdered victims is on the hands of the prisoner, and like the conscience-smitten Lady Macbeth she may exclaim, "Out, damned spot," in vain. The "smell of blood" is there still; "all the perfumes of Arabia cannot sweeten" it; it never can be washed out. To sustain the plea of insanity, he said, the defence ought to have proved her previous life and dis-

position, to let us see that her behavior lately is at variance with it; but they have not done so. The mystery that has been thrown around the prisoner is still unveiled, and I see no proof of her insanity. Her eccentricities were rather the fruits of intoxication than insanity. Her counsel tell you that she supposed ——— had deserted her; is that circumstance likely to drive a woman who carries pistols in her bosom, drinks bad brandy, and indulges in profane and obscene language, into madness. With regard to what she tells about herself, it only proves that this woman had a mania for lying, and her dancing and frantic laughter are nothing but the strivings of a wicked heart to throw off the painful memories that oppressed it. As to her conduct while in jail, you may attribute it to delirium caused by deprivation of the stimulants she had been used to, and the gnawings of a guilty conscience.

On Saturday morning, May 27th, the Hon. *Job Pierson* for the defence, proceeded in a long and eloquent argument to contend for the acquittal of the prisoner on the following grounds:

1st, There is not sufficient evidence to establish the fact that she committed the murder, and

2nd. If you find she did commit the murder, then I contend that it has been clearly shown, that she was at the time insane, and is not therefore responsible for the act. After he had concluded,

Mr. *Hogeboom* addressed the final argument to the

jury on behalf of the people, in an elaborate and effective address of several hours' duration. In the charge to the jury the Court, after reviewing the testimony and stating the law as regards insanity, concluded by saying, "Deal justly with this poor unhappy woman, whose destiny is now committed to your hands. Deal mercifully with her, too. This is your privilege. The law allows every well founded doubt to avail for her acquittal. If, after a full consideration of all the facts in the case, no such doubt rests upon your minds, you need not hesitate, though it be with anguish of heart, to pronounce her guilty. But if you can, after all, say you are not satisfied of her guilt, it will be your more agreeable duty to pronounce a verdict of acquittal."

The jury then retired, and after an absence of nearly three hours, returned with a verdict of "guilty of murder."

Mr. Pierson rose to address the Court, when the prisoner interrupted him with the following remark, uttered in a clear musical tone. "Shame on you, Judge! Shame on you! There is corruption here! There is corruption in the Court!" Mr. Pierson, aided by the Sheriff and his wife, attempted to quiet her, and then proceeded with his remarks, when she again interrupted him, exclaiming, "The Court is corrupt! The District Attorney is corrupt! Some of the Jury are corrupt! I demand another Judge!" Soon after this, the Court adjourned to Monday, May

the 29th, when the prisoner was to be brought up for sentence, on which day she appeared, but her counsel moved for and procured a suspension of the sentence, in order to give them time to prepare a bill of exceptions; nor was she sentenced for over a year from the time of trial.

Her counsel made indefatigable efforts to obtain a new trial, which the prisoner as strenuously opposed; in fact, when she heard that the Supreme Court had denied the motion, she celebrated the news with a grand illumination, and walked amidst the blaze, with great glee, listening to the shouts of the mob who were drawn together by the illumination. On the 14th of June, 1855, she was finally called up for sentence. After some preliminary remarks, which were often interrupted by the prisoner, Judge Harris said—"The sentence of the Court is, that you, Henrietta Robinson, be detained in the county prison of the county of Rensselaer until the 3d day of August next, and on that day, between the hours of 10 o'clock in the forenoon and two o'clock in the afternoon, you be hanged by the neck until you be dead, and may God, in his infinite mercy, save your soul."

Mrs. Robinson immediately said, "You had better pray for your own soul;" then springing on her feet, denounced in very strong language both her friends and her supposed foes, and declared with great vehemence that she was the victim of a "political conspiracy." The Court here said she had better be re-

moved, when pointing her finger at the Judge, said solemnly, "Judge Harris, may the Judge of judges be your judge." She was then removed from Court.

Great exertions were made to prevail on the Governor to commute her sentence to imprisonment for life. Among those who strenuously exerted themselves for this purpose, was a lady from New York, who in a letter to the *Tribune* thus expresses her opinion as to the state of the person's mind. "I did not, when I went to Troy for the purpose of visiting this unhappy woman in her gloomy cell, design to make my public expression of what I saw or heard, but her case is so peculiar, and she is so evidently of an insane organization, so evidently from the first cursed with a disjointed and irresponsible mental and moral sense, that it seems desirable to analyze her case somewhat. Further than this, she has most unquestionably been more sinned against than sinning. No hand has been extended to aid and protect her in her weakness, while many have aided her in her downward tendency, and with such the guilt must rest." When this lady told her that she had come to try and save her, she replied, "No, I want to die, and long for the day to come." * * * "It is better for me to die, I might live thirty years in prison, and death seems better." Finally, she gave the lady the following message to the Governor. "Tell him there is a political party wishing to put him out of office. They wish to crush ——— and ———; and if he commutes my sentence

they will make political capital out of it: and I would rather die than be used as an instrument to ruin a good man. Tell him to let me die as I wish." That the prisoner was sincere in her wish to die seems more than probable, from the fact that notwithstanding the kindness of Sheriff Price and his family towards her as soon as she heard that he was exerting himself to procure her a new trial, she assaulted him with a heavy candlestick with a marble bottom, and struck him so severe a blow that it prostrated him to the ground, and left a large scar on his forehead. For this and other symptoms of ungovernable violence, she was placed in chains for a few days.

As the time for the execution of the sentence drew near, she became more tranquil, and devoted some time to the spiritual exhortations of the Rev. Peter Havemans, a Roman Catholic priest, and prepared an inventory of her effects, which were considerable, with a view to their distribution among her friends.

On the evening of the 27th of July, it was announced to her that the Governor had commuted her sentence to imprisonment for life in Sing Sing Prison.

When the prisoner obtained this information, she commenced breaking up the furniture, and tearing the bed clothes into strips, and then threw them from her barred window to the people in the street, exclaiming while doing so, "I will not go to State prison. I want to die. Why will they torment me more."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE VEILED MURDERESS—CONTINUED.

Removal to Sing Sing—Observations on the way—Reception at the Prison—Strange conduct—Vacillation—Periodical violence—Punishment—Professions of contrition—Indications of insanity—Letters to acquaintances.

Accompanied by Sheriff Price she left Troy, and proceeded by the Hudson River train, which left there at 4 o'clock, A. M., still enveloped in the "blue veil." On the way, the scenery seemed to remind her of other days, for she turned to the Sheriff and said, "You are going to take me home, are you not?" And when she was informed she was going to Sing Sing, she seemed much affected, and wept bitterly. On her arrival at her future home, the officer in charge of the prison asked her the usual questions as to her age, nativity, &c. Instead of answering, she laughed and said, "Why the man is crazy." He peremptorily commanded her to answer the questions correctly, and told her she would get some cold water if she refused, when she laughed immoderately and said again, "The fellow is crazy, surely." In regard to her nativity she finally answered that she was born in Quebec. Among a variety of toilet articles, she had brought

with her, was found a piece of rope and some drugs. She was then sent to the Female Prison and left in charge of the Matron, and the "veiled murderess" was taken leave of by the Sheriff and left to her own reflections.

Notwithstanding the every day intercourse which I have had for ten years with cases similar to Henrietta Robinson's, and notwithstanding I have conducted all her correspondence, and had other official dealings with her, during her three years' confinement in this prison, I am by no means positive as it regards the question of her insanity; but am inclined to the opinion, that she is, at least, a monomaniac, or periodically deranged, and that she was so when she committed the murder. I doubt, in fact, whether she ever had a "well-balanced mind." At any rate the same eccentricites that the testimony on her trial attributed to her are still manifested. She makes the same efforts to hide her countenance from the gaze of strangers now that she made then. She changes from the most innocent and inoffensive looks and language to the most repulsive and vehement, as suddenly now as she is reported to have done then. She assumes the ability to control the political destinies of certain candidates for office as she did then. In a word, here, where for about three years she has had no artificial stimulants whatsoever, (to which the prosecution attributed any appearance of insanity on her part,) she has continued to exhibit, almost daily, the very traits

of character upon which her counsel founded a plea of insanity. "Mrs. Robinson," says one of our Inspectors, in a late newspaper article, "still keeps on her airs, and is a high-spirited, head-strong woman. Whenever a stranger enters her presence, she turns her face to the wall with an air which seems to disclose the inner working of the uppermost thought of her heart—that she is some superior" being. In further proof of the continuous exhibitions of eccentricities, I will present the reader with two or three copies of letters she indited at different periods, since she has been here. The first I shall transcribe *verbatim*. I wrote it at her dictation and request, about a year after she was sent here. Both letters are on the same sheet, the first is to one of her counsel, the second to the Sheriff, who with his family were very humane and kind to her.

SING SING, July 12th, 1856.

DEAR SIR:

Having permission from the proper authorities, I write to you, to say that my health, at present, is rather poor. I wish particularly in this communication, to speak of a matter that I understand has transpired here, and which has grieved me much. I refer to a short article from one of the papers said to have been found in the yard of this prison,* which however was totally false in all its essential features. Now as I have some reason to suppose that the ladies may think that I had something to do in getting up that article,

* No such article was ever published.—J. L.

I desire to have you by some means disabuse their minds in this regard, for I sincerely avow, that I have the fullest confidence in the matrons, as kind-hearted and discreet managers of the institution. They never, to my knowledge, misused or abused any of us. Those editors, therefore, who sent out such an article, must have designed nothing but mischief and slander. As I must write all I have to say to you on this half of my sheet, you will be good enough to hand what is written on the other half to Sheriff ——.

Yours, &c.,

HENRIETTA ROBINSON.

SING SING, July 12th, 1856.

DEAR SIR,

When the Governor was here, for fear he might be induced to pardon me, I told him that I heard at Troy, that if he pardoned me, he would be sure not to be elected again; now you know why I said this, but I wish to say to you, and you are at liberty to say it to my friends if you think it proper, that I heard no such thing; but on the contrary, I heard from yourself and others, that if he had restored me to my friends, instead of sending me to the State Prison he would have been re-elected.

The Captain (who promised to endorse a certain note if I were willing) informed me, to your certain knowledge, that he would see that, should the gentlemen here use their influence to get me pardoned, they would thereby secure their election to any office they might be candidates for. I mistrust that this is doubted by some, but you and Coroner H. can assure them of the fact. Remember me kindly to your family.

Respectfully,

HENRIETTA ROBINSON.

The letters being composed entirely of her own language, and uttered impromptu, speak for themselves in reference both to her sanity and education. To me, who have frequently heard her converse in the same incoherent strain, they seem to need no comment. She lies and confesses it with the same facility of language and apparent sincerity of purpose, and all in the same breath. She will commend and vehemently defend the Governor, the Sheriff, and the prison officers one day, and the next, without any change in their course or sympathy towards her, she will, denounce them as vehemently; and that, too, at a time and under circumstances which she could but know, if she were capable of judging, must materially prejudice her case in view of a future release from confinement. Soon after the above letters were written, she requested, through the matrons, an interview with me. She seized my hand when she entered the room, and literally drenched it with her tears. A more sincerely contrite person, than her looks and words declared her to be during that interview, I scarcely remember to have seen. I said to her among other things, that the Saviour of men alone could forgive and bless her, that he had said to her and the world, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." This, said I, is what you want. "Yes indeed," was her prompt reply, "for I have not had a moment's rest since I was sixteen years of age." The very next time she came to have me write for her,

she had nothing but frowns and bitter complaints for everybody and everything. I reminded her of the change in her appearance and language, adding "You cannot become a follower of the meek and lowly Saviour, without professing and manifesting his spirit." Her face seemed to light up with a momentary tranquility. "It cannot be expected," said she, "that mortals can exhibit the same degree of perfection that the immaculate Son of God did." She then proceeded to dictate a letter to the person denominated in the newspaper articles, from which we have quoted somewhat extensively in this sketch, her "protector," but of which I kept no copy. I recollect, however, this peculiarity about the letter, the first paragraph was dictated in language expressive of familiarity and strong though subdued affection, the second contained peal after peal of indignation, maledictions and menace, and so on through the whole letter. After she was through, I, as my custom is, read it to her and enquired if it was "all right?" I shall never forget the perfect satisfaction beaming in her countenance, while uttering the prompt response, "Yes, sir, all right."

On the 2nd June, 1857, she dictated the following letter to her attorney:

Dear Sir,—I wrote to you some time ago, but have received no answer. This don't discourage me. I therefore take the liberty to forward another to you. I have proved you to be a kind and faithful friend, and therefore submit to you some of my present reflec-

tions. I went to our Chaplain some three months ago, with as much sincerity as I would go to my God, to acknowledge my sinfulness and to enquire what I must do to be saved. I felt all I then said, and feel the same now, regardless of what my enemies have said, and I hope to remain thus as long as I live, however I may be slandered for it and for other things.

I feel that I am and have been suffering solely for the reason that I happened to be, or rather that my life and peace and freedom happened to be in the way of the prosperity of ambitious politicians. But let these miserable, whining demagogues enjoy their triumphs in crushing a poor victim; their end is nigh, and oh what an end, both in this world and that which is to come!

Please answer this and let me have some good advice from you once more, while, believe me,

I remain your afflicted friend,

HENRIETTA ROBINSON.

The above is, I think, the most rational letter she has dictated since she has been here, which is accounted for from the fact that she happened to be in one of her calm or comparatively lucid moods at the time it was written.

The impressions I have gathered from the ever changing course pursued by this woman since she came here, respecting her sanity, are so well and cogently expressed by a gentleman who had frequent personal interviews with her in Troy jail, besides being familiar with the testimony given at her trial, that I beg leave to close this sketch by quoting his words as then uttered:

If the doomed woman was not insane, it is difficult, indeed, we may add, impossible, to analyze to any degree of satisfaction, her mental or moral character. On any other supposition her deportment is without a parallel, and utterly incomprehensible. That she believes herself a political victim, sacrificed upon the altar of party vengeance, there can be little question. Neither can there be much, if any doubt, that she regarded the suggestion of a commutation of her sentence as a subtle device of her enemies, to accomplish a political end, and to subject her to grievous wrongs and injuries. In her religious moods she was evidently sincere, for the time being. Still in all her acts, so unnatural and inconsistent, there were evidences of hallucination. In one breath she would beg for the salvation of her own soul, and in the next consign the souls of her enemies to perdition. In the midst of her devotions, with hands clasped, and kneeling before the cross, some mirth provoking memory would arrest the solemnity, and as the visitor approached her cell, whether his ears were to be greeted with sounds of prayer, the voice of laughter, or the utterance of bitter malediction, depended on her mood.

CHAPTER XXV.

LETTERS FROM DISCHARGED CONVICTS.

In the earlier chapters of this volume some account was given of the Sabbath School which was for some years maintained in the prison, but afterwards discontinued by a change of the administration of the State government, and of course that of the prison also.

But though this instrument of the greatest possible good was, through the unhappy influence of political prejudice, discontinued, and has never been re-established, yet by degrees the prison authorities were prevailed upon to grant other and very important auxiliaries. Among other things, as yet unnoticed, was that of the quarterly recitation, before the convicts in the chapel, of extracts of letters from our discharged prisoners. I will take the liberty, as a specimen, of inserting one of these quarterly reports. It was read to the convicts on the first Sabbath in March, 1846, and I do this the more freely from the fact that the most if not all the persons therein referred to are known to have "kept out of trouble" up to this time, and some of them have died in peace.

March 1st, 1846.

I purpose to present to you this morning, by way of encouraging any resolutions to reform that are strengthening in your hearts, a few extracts from letters I have received from our discharged men within the past three months. The advice and admonition received from men who have been tempted and tried in all points like ourselves, is much more available to our consciences, than that received from those who have never been so situated; hence, I intend to devote this occasion to letting you hear from those who were from three months to four years ago your companions in bonds. I commence with the one who left the most recently.

E. H. received executive clemency, and left here on the 12th of last January. He went to his family at the West. His letter is dated on the 28th of the same month. He says, "I arrived safe home in four days after I left you, and found my friends all well, and with open arms to receive me. Mr. Luckey, I can't meet a man in the street who used to know me, but what he receives me with open arms. They advise me not to leave the place at all, for they say if a man lose a knife in one lot he is not to go into another to find it. I must say that I think it was one of the best things that ever happened to me in going to prison, for I was one of the most wicked of all men before I came in that place. Mr. Wickes from Albany called at my room when he was there last, and talked

to me for a long time, and it gave me much satisfaction to hear him; he explained to me many passages of scripture that I never understood, neither should I, had I not been placed in that situation. I used to read the Bible only to pick flaws in it, and never read it through until I came there, and while there I read it through three times, and now it appears to me to be the sweetest and most pleasing book I ever read. My wife also I found had become a firm believer in Christ. The death of our dear little son, and her severe sickness, have been the means of great good to her."

Another, A. L. M., who has been studying a profession since he left (Sept. 16, '45), says, under date of January 23d, '46: "Our lectures have just closed, and I have passed through all the examinations to the entire satisfaction of the professors. Patience and perseverance must be my motto, and with the blessings of our Heavenly Father and the assistance and encouragement of kind friends, I hope to succeed. May the best of Heaven's blessings rest upon your indefatigable exertions and labors for those unfortunate beings under your kind and salutary instructions, and may your efforts be blessed to their present and eternal happiness."

Another, Samuel H., who was discharged last October, says, under date of the 27th January, 1846, "I take up my pen to inform you that on Tuesday next I leave this place for Boston, and thence to England. I feel it a duty, at the earnest request of my sister-in-

law to return to my native land and the bosom of my family. I will write to you immediately on my arrival in England. In regard to my spiritual welfare, all is well; it is good for me that I have been afflicted, I desire to live under the shadow of the cross."

One of the original poems of this young man I not long since read to you. Another follows. It is entitled—

THE CONVICT TO HIS BIBLE.

Heaven's best and dearest treasure,
Record of the great I AM;
Source of comfort, source of pleasure,
Ever flowing, healing balm.

Are we in affliction cradled?
Thou canst make the bitter sweet;
And by thy support enabled,
Human ills we calmly meet.

Thouthe sin-sick soul can lighten,
When the clouds of darkness lower;
Andwith cheerful smiles can brighten
Death's, cold death's, approaching hour.

Atheists may mock and jeer thee,
But the time will surely come,
When thine enemies shall hear thee,
Speak the sentence of their doom.

Beacon light of man's salvation,
Guardian of domestic bands,
Purest fortress of our nation,
Rock on which our freedom stands.

Were thou banished from our border,
In our homes no longer read,
Rapine, lust, and foul disorder,
O'er Columbia's vales would spread.

Home would lose its sweet communion,
Fire-side altars be o'erturned,
All that elevates our Union,
With contemptuous coldness spurned.

Intellectual flowers would languish,
Poisoned be the springs of peace,
And, unmoved by human anguish,
True benevolence would cease.

A colored lad, J. P., out nearly three years, writes under date of November 17th : " I do not forget your kindness to us poor prisoners when all refuge had failed us, in spending the whole Sabbath in calling at our cells, &c. We were rebels against Heaven and the laws of our country. My prayer to God is that he would keep me humble and looking to him for assistance every day. I pray also that the Lord would second your efforts to persuade those under your care to flee the wrath to come, and lay hold on eternal life. I belong to the Rev. Mr. Wright's church. You may inquire about me at," &c.

J. C. K., under date of December 24th, 1845, says: " I am engaged this winter in lumbering ; in the spring I purpose, if the Lord will, to go down the Ohio river. Dear friend, my heart is indeed glad that I was arrested in my wild course, and I live in the blessed hope that my soul shall praise that kind God who stretched out his arm of mercy over me before it was too late, and my soul is often drawn out in prayer that my fellow prisoners might come to serve the Lord also. My friend, from my heart I thank you for your instructions to me while there, and I beg an interest in your prayers that I might prove true to the Lord."

J. T. F. says, under date of 18th November : " After leaving the prison, September 15th, 1844, with a cer-

tificate from Mr. Eldridge and yourself, I returned to this place and received a warm reception from many of my old and respectable acquaintances. I worked a few months at the trade I learned in prison, and saved something to start in business with, and am now keeping a victualling cellar, and am happy to state to you that I am doing well. My child is well, but my wife died here in 1840. It is my determination, with God's blessing, to so guard my conduct that I may again equal what I have been in the scale of society. I send you my warmest thanks for your spiritual advice and attention while there, praying for your welfare and mine own while in this world, and when we come to lay down our bodies in the dust, I hope through the merits of a crucified Saviour we shall meet in heaven. I wish you may read this to my old fellow prisoners. It may have a good effect, and can do no harm. It is the sincere wish of my heart that they may be enlightened to a sense of their duty towards God and man."

The next individual, J. F., I notice has written several times and always in the same strain. His last letter being dated 20th of last month, is so full that it is difficult to make selections. His wife who writes in the same letter, experienced a change of heart at about the same time that he did in prison. I should like to read the whole letter but have time only to make a very few extracts. He begins—"My dear pastor: I have been going to write for the last three

weeks, but you know my troublesome fault of procrastination. It does appear to me that I have been *going* to do many things good and better ever since I was a child, and yet for the want of that valuable principle *decision* or immediate action, I have accomplished little or nothing worthy the gift of living or reason. My dear friend, what advantages of high import are within the reach of those of your charge. My heart's desire is for their happiness, as I now see and feel the value of the golden moments they possess, and which are passing away; *moments* to secure the armor of safety against the foes of the soul; *moments* upon which hang eternal things. Oh that my fellow beings in the house of bondage would only allow themselves to hear and be cheered by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, "the sinner's friend," how soon would they be assured that it is good to be afflicted. I could write pages from the experience of my own heart, but I shall weary you. In seeking the kingdom of heaven I feel that all things that are necessary for us are sure to be added. When I left you I came into a strange city, scarcely anything like friends or money; without a trade, or means of earning a living; feeble and weak in body, the past staring me in the face, and no visible prospect for the better. But I had the will and determination, and the way opened to a *good will.* I applied myself immediately to learning a trade, and by attention and industry I soon obtained a knowledge of it. I have never really wanted for anything, have

been able to keep out of all debt, and enjoy the privilege at times of contributing something to benevolent purposes. The great Parent of mercy be thanked, loved and obeyed for all his benefits to me. I beg an interest in your prayers, that I may prove faithful unto death."

A. H. S., who was pardoned out about 3 years ago, says, in a letter received a week or two since, " Dear friend :—Among the most insignificant of friends permit me to address you. Striving as ever to do something, but as ever unfortunate. Dear friend, I wish you knew my feelings, my desires, and the difficulties which lie in my way, come what may, by the grace of our Heavenly Father I shall maintain my integrity."

H. B., who has been out about three years, writes some two weeks ago, nine pages of foolscap, I can only, however, present you with some of his original poetry, after saying that he has escaped, unhurt, the voracious traps that have been laid for his feet.

'Tis better to endure the wrong
Which evil hands and tongues commit,
The bold encroachment of the strong,
The shafts that calumny direct,
The scornful bearing of the proud,
The sneers and laughter of the crowd.

And harder still it is to bear
The censure of the good and wise,
Who, ignorant of what you are,
Or blinded by the slandere's lies,
Look coldly on or pass you by
In silence, with averted eye.

But when the friends, in whom we trust
As steadfast as the mountain rock,
Fly and are scattered like the dust,
Before misfortune's whirlwind shock,
No love remains to cheer your fall,
This is more terrible than all.

'Tis then indeed the man of grief
Should no more to the tempest bend;
For soon or late must come relief—
The coldest, darkest night will end;
Hope in the *true* heart *never* dies,
But trusts until its day-star rise.

Conscious of purity and worth,
One may with calm assurance wait
The tardy recompense of earth.
And e'en should justice come too late
To soothe the spirit's homeward flight,
Yet *one* thing's sure as fate itself,
Heaven, at last the wrong will right.

H. O.

APPENDIX.

For the purpose of connecting the prison operations with the former, and bringing before the reader, in as small a compass as possible, the general statistics of both departments, I deem it important to insert the following extracts from some three of my reports. They will be found to contain precisely that kind of information generally sought for by intelligent visitors and humane legislators.

THE CHAPLAIN'S REPORT

OF THE MOUNT PLEASANT STATE PRISON, FOR 1843.

GENTLEMEN—The present moral and religious condition of my charge is so nearly the same with that reported last year, that a similarity is unavoidable.

While it must be conceded that not a few who left us with fair promises of reform, have disappointed our hopes, it is *known* that the majority of this class of convicts have fully justified the confidence reposed in them.

The facilities afforded us to ascertain the history of discharged convicts are unusually great, as many of their relatives live in the city, and are, consequently, seen or heard from frequently. We speak advisedly therefore in making the above assertion.

Those discharged convicts of whom I spoke favorably last year, as having sustained themselves respectably, &c., are, with two or three exceptions, still doing well ; and some of them are distinguishing themselves by works of righteousness more than they were formerly distinguished for vice.

The Sabbath-school continues to prosper, and much benefit is derived both to the teacher and scholar. About one half of the whole number in the male department is employed in it, and all in the female.

Soon after its establishment, which was some two years since, it became necessary, in the opinion of the agent and principal keeper, either to employ the better sort of convicts as teachers, or abandon the school. Amidst many fears, the former plan, by way of experiment, was adopted, and, notwithstanding the most rigid vigilance exercised over them by the officers during the session of each school, not a solitary impropriety, on the part of the teacher has been discovered.

The scores of distinguished visitors who have honored the school with their inspection, and public approval, connected with the happy results upon the unfortunate persons for whose benefit this experiment was made, must convince the most skeptical *theorist* of the importance attached to its continuance.

Much of our success, both in this department and in the public service, is attributable to the uniform presence, and personal efforts of the principal officers of this institution.

Example in this, as in every good cause, is worth infinitely more, than bare precept. Those clergymen who have occasionally assisted me in my pulpit labors and private interviews with the convicts, have expressed pleasure in observing an increasing attention to the word preached, and an increased seriousness of demeanor in all their public exercises.

It affords me pleasure to know that I address those who, in their *official capacity*, have witnessed these interesting tokens, and can therefore duly appreciate what I say.

The library, which, under the personal supervision of the agent, has been so managed as to present each convict with a different volume weekly, has, in many cases, resulted in the implantation of those true principles of action, without which any hope of *permanent* reform would be vain.

I would again record my hearty approval of that most worthy resolution of your honorable board, which commits all the punishment awarded to the prisoners &c., to the exclusive control of the principal keeper, as avoiding much evil, and resulting in great benefit to the moral feelings of the delinquent.

That the convicts have been cheerful, contented and happy, is evinced from the fact that there have been no attempts at insurrection, and but one escape during the last two years.

The Sabbath-school in the female prison is still prosperous. In both departments, the cause of temperance has received a hearty response from the rent bosoms of their suffering inmates.

I regret to say, that the number of deaths, and the increase of sickness among us, have been unusually great this year.

Those chronic diseases to which licentious men are always subject, have this season, more than formerly, terminated in what is called "quick consumption." I have the gratification, however, of referring to my note book, in which is recorded, as it fell from their dying lips, that soul-stirring testimony, which strongly indicates the preparedness of many of them for this their last change.

The increase of deranged cases among us this year.

has been in exact proportion to the increase of sickness; showing, as I think, an intimate connection between mental and physical derangement. If this inference be a correct one, how important to have erected within the walls of the prison a suitable apartment where your physician could *appropriately* treat his patient, on the first developments of his aberrations of mind.

This course might, and probably would, frequently result in the recovery of the insane person, and thereby save the institution the expense and hazard of a removal to the insane hospital.

I regard that part of our chapel service which consists of singing, to be of great moral advantage to the convicts; the satisfying, refining and elevating influence of which is only to be witnessed to be duly appreciated.

It would be well, perhaps, to state here a simple fact which I have taken some pains to ascertain; namely, that out of the sixty or seventy male convicts who have been pardoned, during the three years of my chaplaincy, but four have returned; and three of these were pardoned *solely* from legal commendation, and not from any confidence expressed in their moral change. I am therefore still of the opinion, that executive clemency, judiciously exercised, results in the cultivation of that peculiar species of gratitude, without which there can be no hope of permanent reformation, but with which the possessor is ever prepared to be benefited, even by the severest penalties of a broken law.

These results have been witnessed by the agent and myself, during the past week; while visiting a few of these cases, we found them generally enjoying the entire confidence of the community, and that, too, mostly, in the very region of country where they had committed their crimes.

The fact that we are decreasing in numbers, when viewed in connection with the obvious difficulty of procuring employment, indicates a favorable state of things. We should, in my opinion, decrease much more rapidly, if the agent's views respecting a more generous provision for discharged convicts were in some way carried out. As, however, my views on this subject were stated at length in my last year's report, I will only add, that it is my firm conviction, that Mr. Seymour's suggestions are of vast importance, both to the community at large, and the individuals concerned.

Respecting the amount of my own labors, I would merely state, that, as usual, there is preaching at nine o'clock on each Sabbath morning, in the male prison, and at ten in the female; the Sabbath schools being held in each prison during the interim of preaching. The remainder of the day I spend in attending service in the hospital, and in personal conversation with those in the cells who desire it, which generally occupies all the day. The week is spent in visiting the sick in the hospital and elsewhere, and in conducting the correspondence and intercourse of those who have obtained liberty to write to or converse with their friends. With these, and other less important duties, every day of my time has been occupied; the result of which is with humble confidence submitted to the control of Him in whose hands are all hearts.

With grateful recollections of the respect and courtesy received from your honorable board, and from the officers associated with me in this most responsible charge, I remain, gentlemen,

Your humble servant,

JOHN LUCKEY.

REPORT OF THE CHAPLAIN.

To the Inspectors of the Mount Pleasant State Prison.
1844.

GENTLEMEN,—My own convictions are that the present moral and religious condition of the convicts is, on the whole, favorable. These convictions are founded principally upon the good and uniform attention to the word preached, the personal interest manifested in the truths advanced, and the quiet and orderly demeanor among the prisoners. As, however, the honorable Board have not unfrequently witnessed these tokens while in attendance upon our chapel service, and other appropriate duties; and as his excellency Governor Bouck, and other distinguished statesmen and clergy have also favored us with their presence on such occasions, I deem it to be as unnecessary, as it would be presumptuous for me to pronounce more definitely on this subject. I would merely add, that a higher and, in my opinion, a better tone of moral and religious feeling would be discovered among the convicts, had the resolution of the Inspectors, inviting competent teachers to conduct the Sabbath school been responded to. I cannot but hope, therefore, that the call will yet be heard and answered by those to whom it was addressed, or by some other class of humane and benevolent citizens.

The observation and experience of four years' chaplaincy, have but confirmed me in the opinion that any kind of information and instruction which have a direct tendency to cultivate and strengthen the virtuous inclinations, and at the same time counteract and enervate the vicious propensities, may be imparted to

the convicts with perfect safety, if not success, but no other.

From this wholesome rule of action I have not voluntarily deviated, either in my private interviews or public labors with the convicts.

My Sabbath labors consist, briefly, of a sermon in each prison, services in the hospital, and private interviews at the cells of those convicts who send for me. These generally occupy six hours successively, and are therefore exceedingly exhausting.

The labors of the week (for I am at the prison daily,) are made up of visits to the sick, both in the hospitals and without, attending funerals, inquiring of the keepers concerning the character and conduct of those convicts with whom I have conversed on the Sabbath, and making diligent inquiries of Sheriffs and other visitors, concerning the character and habits of the convicts previous to their coming here, as well as after their discharge. I did formerly, and indeed do now, spend some time in securing, reading, and filing away letters addressed to the convicts, which contain much data, from which can be inferred the predominant propensities of those to whom they are addressed. I also consume time and means in visiting the families and friends of those convicts who are now in prison, as well as those who have left, and as the families, &c. of nearly one half of our men live in and near the city of New York, much can be accomplished in a short time.

Now all this diligence of inquiry may by some be deemed not merely unimportant, but absolutely impertinent; when, however, the exclusive objects and beneficial results of this solicitude shall be fully developed, it will be duly appreciated. The sum of this kind of information, whether elicited from a convict in his cell, the letters addressed to him, his friends, the

Sheriff who arrested and brought him to prison, or the Keeper who has a constant oversight of him, is carefully recorded in a note book at the time. This record is made under the name and number of the cell of said convict. Hence when invited to a private interview with this convict, I immediately refer to my note book, and by aid of the index, trace the peculiar natures of his character; with these vivid in recollection, I am prepared to put down all his efforts at deception. At first he appears surprised and inclined to answer or inquire how I came in possession of his life's history; then alarmed and finally subdued.

Let me say to you, gentlemen, that in my humble opinion, it was chiefly through the agency of this kind of knowledge that the late subjugation of the celebrated M. E. was achieved. The disciplinarian on this occasion had but just been made acquainted with the alarming facts, by the application of which he so effectually humbled this vile man. Now had not these facts been communicated and treasured up, that heart-mending, as well as heart breaking reference to an abused mother's woes, could not have been made.

A thorough knowledge also of those characteristic passions, affections, propensities and imbecilities, which gave being to their misfortunes, furnishes its possessor with that kind of pulpit eloquence which, although it may not suit the refinement of innocence and education, is nevertheless calculated to apply with particular force to the consciences of these men.

By reference to the names opposite Nos. 27, 66 and 79 on the catalogue of discharged convicts which accompanies this report, it will be seen that three insane cases were recovered mostly through this knowledge of the personal character and habits of the individuals in question.

The treatment in these cases, was predicated on the

assumption that an excessive indulgence of some of the predominant passions or affections, had originated the mental disorder; the success of the application demonstrated the truth of the assumption. The application however, as will be readily perceived, is limited to particular cases of insanity.

The honorable board will, I am persuaded, have the goodness to excuse any appearance of egotism that this free communication may assume, when it is remembered that probably the most of these facts could not have been presented to them, in a tangible form at least, unconnected with the Chaplain's name. Assuming therefore this indulgence, I would refer further, and state that from the items of information already alluded to, as also from personal observation, I am convinced that the following will be found to be the controlling traits of character exhibited in the lives and conduct of the majority of our prisoners.

1. An unusual degree of self-conceit, without any appropriate share of self-respect.
2. A strong but sordid affection for the opposite sex; this is equally applicable to the inmates of both prisons.
3. Sociability without friendship.
4. Love of ease, both of body and mind; and hence
5. Inveterate ignorance and indolence.
6. A strong inclination of self-indulgence, without regard to the accommodation even of benefactors and friends; and hence
7. Cherished ingratitude.
8. Dissatisfaction and restlessness.

Now let these propensities be unrestrainedly indulged, and who cannot perceive that the legitimate results would be recklessness or presumptuous daring, rape or polygamy, prodigality, revenge, larceny, burglary, retaliation and deception.

Ought not that prison discipline therefore, which aims the most successful blow at the controlling propensities be regarded as the most perfect? Through the aid of my note books (now seven or eight in number), I have been able at least partially to test the "silent" or "Auburn system" in this respect, by keeping an eye open and searching out discharged convicts.

Now the practicability of this system, as far at least as it regards the subjugation of the prisoner during his confinement, has been successfully treated, and is therefore no longer a question.

But the utility of the system in preventing crime by the reformation of the criminal, is yet, it would seem, problematical; a fearful problem indeed; one, gentlemen, on the solution of which hangs the destiny of the entire system. Might not the sanguinary system of jurisprudence as well prevail as the penitentiary, if reformation be impossible?

Aware that the mere *ipse dixit* of a superficial observer would fail to satisfy either the inspectors or the public on this subject, I have during the last three years, as has been already intimated, made every lawful effort to collect and concentrate all the statistics which had a bearing on this question, for the express purpose of presenting them to the board at a suitable time. That time has now come and the chief reason which convinces me of it is that these statistics include a few months over three years, which is the average term of indictments. Hence it will be seen in the documents which accompany this report, that not far from 800 is the average number of convicts in prison during this time; while the same number during the same time have been discharged, by death or otherwise, of course our prison is filled and emptied once in three years. The statistics of three years, therefore, will afford criteria from which unequivocal decisions may be

had in reference to the comparative utility of the "Auburn system."

The honorable Board will perceive that the first item on the accompanying list of statistics includes the names, addresses and references of 100 convicts who have been discharged since the spring of 1840, and who, when last seen or heard from, were doing well.

Permit me here, gentlemen, to suggest the importance of not exposing those men when inquiry at their several addresses may be made for them; for until the public mind can be disabused on this subject, they might as well be exiled as exposed. While I have little or no sympathy for the determined rogue, I am prepared when the prodigal shall cease feeding swine and be heard to say from his heart, "I will arise and go to my father—to meet him yet a great way off," and I am happy in the conviction that the board entertain similar views. And I would ask why should we not "rejoice over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons:" have we not a paramount example for it?

Wherefore, then, this universal proscription, and that too from men who profess to revere the name of Howard, and even of Christ himself? Am I safe in affirming, gentlemen, that men known to be as vile as some of these discharged convicts were, are nevertheless received into workshops, and other respectable associations, without any demur, so long at least, as it is known that they have money or friends; while convicts only, as it would seem, because they have not been adroit enough to elude the vigilance of the police, and consequently have endured the penalty of the law, must, without distinction, be doomed to eternal infamy.

The mildest and perhaps the most correct apology which can be offered for this state of things, is the want, on the part of the umpire in these cases, of either

a capacity to discriminate, or a disposition to exercise it.

In either case, the penitentiary system would suffer far less in reputation, if such persons would not assume the dictation of public opinion. To further qualify and guard the items of statistics above alluded to, it is deemed advisable to state a few expletive facts:

1st. The names of more than a score of discharged convicts, whom I have casually seen or heard from, and am confident therefore that they are doing well, might, and in justice to the cause, ought to be added to the list; but as no other reference could be offered than my own treacherous recollections, it was deemed injudicious to present them.

2nd. In consequence of frequent removals, &c., of those whose names are on the list, the Board may not be able, even by the references given, to find all of them. If so, however, I herewith pledge myself to supply the deficiency, by searching out the address wanting.

3rd. Should general success attend the investigation which I apprehend will be the case, still some few may be found who, since last heard from, have retrograded from the path of rectitude; nay, some may at this moment be on the way to condign punishment. If this proves to be the case, however, the honorable gentlemen will do me the justice, after having reported to them my honest convictions of the constitutional imbecilities, &c. of these men, to credit the assertion that such a result would not surprise, though I confess it would most deeply afflict and aggrieve me.

4th. A respectable number of these 100 men are in church followship with the different denominations of Christians.

5th. The most of them had signed the temperance pledge when they left the prison, as may be seen by

the catalogue attached to the pledge, which is retained in the prison office.

6th. It may be seen by reference to the 3rd item of statistics, which contains the names of all those convicts who have been both discharged from and returned to prison since the spring of 1850, that the average time of their absence is about six months, consequently we hope, though it be with trembling, that those 100 men will, having passed the season of their strongest temptations scatheless, "endure to the end."

The 2nd item of statistics which accompanies this report, contains all the names of those convicts who have died during the period already specified. They are, as will be seen, 74 in number. Those who gave any reasonable "hope in death," are designated by the term, "well," which is connected with 22 of their names. By attention to the reference given, the gentlemen will learn that not a few were deeply concerned for their spiritual welfare sometime previous to their last sickness; hence, hope of their cases is proportionably strengthened.

Will not those who have confidence in the assertion that "he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins," give due credit to the penitentiary system for this happy result.

I say system, gentlemen, because it is quite evident to me that without an harmonious action of the entire whole, no such results could have been produced. Let but one link in this powerful chain be broken, and every other would be comparatively useless. What good could the Chaplain do to these men, unrestrained by the discipline of the "silent system."

It will be seen by the third item of statistics, that of the 854 who have been discharged since the spring of 1840, only 43 have returned to prison. Hence not far

from one in 19, are what is familiarly called " second comers."

From item four, the Inspectors will learn the fact, that of the 95 who have been favored subjects of executive clemency during the same period, only four have returned to this prison, which furnishes an unsophisticated argument in favor of a judicious exercise of the " pardoning power."

Permit me now, gentlemen, to make a few general deductions from the facts brought to view by the foregoing statistics.

It has been stated that 854 criminals, after having tested the "Auburn system," of penitentiary discipline for some three years have been discharged. Now the question of the greatest possible interest to the institution is, where are these men? The statistics which accompany this report answer this question only in part. They state that 74 of the 854 died in prison, leaving 780. Deduct from this number the 43 who have returned to prison, and the 100 whom the statistics represent as doing well, still 637 remain to be accounted for. Again, the important question revolves, Where are they? My own opinion is, gentlemen, that at least one-half of them ought to be added to the list of those 100 who are represented as " doing well;" and had I time and means sufficient to have warranted me in pursuing the same course in ascertaining the condition of these which was pursued in reference to them, they might have been so added.

My reasons for this opinion are these:

1st. I should know the most of these men, let me see them when I might, but in none of the prisons which I have visited, have I seen altogether, during the three years, more than six of them. Nor have I heard from those who had a personal knowledge of the facts. I have made diligent inquiry respecting it,

of more than that number, hence I conclude that there are not as many in other prisons as some who evi dently speak at random would have us believe.

2nd. The arrest of those who have once been in prison is generally announced in the papers, but I have read all which came to hand with this constantly in view, and up to this hour I have failed of seeing more than half a dozen of the names or descriptions of persons which could apply to the men we are inquiring for, nor have I heard any person say he has seen or known of more.

3d. The population of the State was less by one-third in the winter of 1830—31, than it now is, yet there were 200 convicts more then than there now is. Under these circumstances, what charitable, or even reasonable conjecture is left for us other than that a majority of these men have found an asylum in some sequestered spot, where far from the proscriptive, withering ire of their more fortunate fellow men, they may consummate the good resolutions they formed while under your wholesome discipline. From a note-book which I denominate "Book of general Investigations," it will be seen that about 70 per cent. of our men were led to the commission of the crimes for which they are imprisoned, through habits of intoxication ; and from the same source it will be ascertained that 96 per cent. of them have not constantly, nor for any length of time, attended Sabbath schools of any description previous to their incarceration. The longest term which any one had attended was four seasons.

The singing in this, as well as in the male prison, when appropriately conducted, has, in my humble opinion, a very salutary influence upon the moral feelings of convicts.

As it could not otherwise be made known, and as I conceive it to be due the Inspectors, as also the De-

partment I have the honor and pleasure of occupying, I beg leave now to make a few brief statements respecting the manner in which my personal and less public intercourse with the convicts is conducted.

The leading maxim on which this manner is founded, is that the convicts, though men and women in stature, are with but few exceptions children in understanding and moral courage. Hence their hasty conceptions, immature decisions, uncontrolled wills, disorganized and superstitious views, and unsettled preferences.

Being convinced that children, because they can understand it better, are therefore more influenced by example than precept, I endeavor studiously to avoid any word or act which might possibly be construed into an improper pattern for the prisoners to imitate. I, of course, make no threats, and but few promises; when made, however, punctuality is observed at whatever cost. I always, when it accords with the duties of my office, hear what they have to say patiently, and answer promptly, but never peevishly. As already intimated, I never communicate anything to them other than what I most honestly believe will further their moral and religious improvement, particularly avoiding anything which might disaffect them towards other prison officers.

I never trifle or use any of those familiarities with them upon which might be predicated assumptions of equality; consequently, I have never to my knowledge received any tokens of disrespect, but on the contrary, I have under all circumstances only had to intimate a desire or wish, and it was responded to on their part without the least hesitancy.

The two simple propositions by which the intercourse with my fellow and superior officers is directed are,

1st. That union of effort is essential to success.

2nd. To render to each all the privileges which can in equity be inferred from his responsibilities. And as a legitimate result, I may be permitted to congratulate myself upon the mutual respect and general success which, so far as I know, characterize that intercourse. However, gentlemen, as far as your unworthy servant is concerned, he desires most devoutly to ascribe any success which may have attended his feeble labors to the might, majesty, power and glory of Him who hath said—"without me ye can do nothing." I take great pleasure in acknowledging the gratuitous supply of tracts which we have received from the Rev. Mr. Orchard, of the New York City Tract Society, and from Mr. J. A. Ackley, of the A. T. Society.

In closing this report permit me to say, gentlemen, that I shall be exceedingly gratified if by the feeble light it admits, your hearts shall be encouraged and your hands strengthened to the performance of those high and responsible duties which devolve upon you.

I am not unconscious of the fact, gentlemen, that two prisons, which in the providence of God you and your subordinates are called to manage, have by the distinguishment of location and otherwise, become the world's great sampler.

Hence, gentlemen, you have had and shall have my best wishes for your paramount success.

Yours respectfully,

JOHN LUCKEY.

THE CHAPLAIN'S REPORT.

SING SING, Nov. 30th, 1856.

To the Inspectors of the New York State Prisons:

GENTLEMEN—The fact of your having two separate and distinct prisons at Sing Sing, and consequently that the services and responsibilities of the principal officers, as also the current expenses are two-fold, "should be kept before the people," and especially before the Legislature, until it shall become evident that the fact is duly appreciated.

Consonant with this opinion and the statute requiring "the chaplain to make an annual report, stating therein what services he has performed, and the fruits if any, of his instructions," &c., I respectfully submit the following statements:

I have preached twice each Sabbath: at nine o'clock A. M., in the male, and immediately thereafter in the female prison. At the close of the services in the female chapel, I return to the hall and hospital of the male prison, where I remain some two hours, responding to the calls of the serious-minded and the sick.

The services rendered during the week time have been constant. Indeed, had I had four hands and two heads I could have found useful employment for them all.

During the forenoon of two weeks out of four, I have been confined to my office in giving out books. The convicts come in, two or three at a time, select their books, and after I charge the books severally to their account, they retire and give place to other two or three, until all the reading convicts are served. This process is repeated every month, thus fully occupying, by a single transaction, one quarter of my time.

The elevating, refining, and softening "fruits" of this labor—resulting as much, in my opinion, from the *modus operandi* of the transaction as from the contents of the book selected, fully justifies the labor and time bestowed. This mode of distribution brings me, as will at once be perceived, into personal contact, under exceedingly favorable circumstances, with a large majority of the male prisoners once in every four weeks, when I can and do drop a friendly word of advice, admonition and encouragement to each as he passes through the office.

This personal intercourse has, very evidently, tended to disarm educational prejudice of its stubbornness, to smooth down the rough edges of the crabbed and morose, to cheer the disconsolate, to encourage penitential efforts and to "open an effectual door" to their hearts for the ministrations of the chapel. The morally "elevating" element developed by this mode of changing the books, consists, doubtless, of the privilege it guarantees the prisoner of selecting a book, independently of the slightest dictation, and of appealing to his "magnanimity,"—which I have frequently done, both in the chapel and office—for a timely return of the book, "uninjured," to the library. And let me here say, that I know not a single instance during the year, wherein the confidence thus publicly reposed in their magnanimity has ultimately been forfeited. Had there been it could have been readily detected, as I keep a minute and faithful record, both of the book selected and the cell to which it is carried.

That this result is surprising to those who see not the importance of uniting mental and moral with physical discipline is to be expected. But the other day a keeper said to me, "Well, Mr. Chaplain, do the convicts lie to you as much as ever when they come to change their books?" My reply, in substance, was,

that I had not, to my knowledge, been deceived by the convicts respecting their books during the past year. "Why, sir," said he, "you surprise me; we can scarcely believe a word any of them says." This latter assertion reminded me of a poetic saying of the celebrated Lorenzo Dow:

> "Where men believe in witches, witches are;
> Where men don't believe, there is none there."

That is appropriately applied, when disciplinarians believe that their men, without distinction, will "lie," and take special pains to remind them of their total lack of confidence in convict veracity, nothing else can be expected than a continuation of this evil practice.

On the other hand, when disciplinarians take a more enlightened, liberal and discriminating view of the character and habits of their men, and seek opportunities to confide in what little veracity and honorable feelings there may remain in the unfortunate beings committed to their care, they will have occasion to congratulate themselves in view of its elevating effects. Our plan would have worked much easier, and the library would have been much more productive of good, had it been replenished with new and suitable books. Let me beg the honorable board, therefore, to renew with increased zeal, their application to the Legislature for a liberal appropriation for this purpose. The newest books we have, were purchased by myself just before the occurrence of our last great fire, which destroyed a few of them. There are still remaining, however, about two hundred volumes. These, though they have been in constant use, are, as I have already indicated, in surprisingly good condition.

I have succeeded in gathering into the library from shops, cells, and other nooks and corners of the prison, some three hundred and eighty-two old books. These were purchased from four to eight years since, and are

so torn and disfigured, that I cannot with any satisfaction distribute them much longer.

The correspondence of the prisoners, in both prisons, has been conducted on the same principle this as last year. The prisoner being permitted, by your humane and enlightened arrangements, to hold intercourse by letter with his relatives once in three months, is sure to be at my office on or before the day of privilege. He comes with the slate on which his letter is written in his hand. I take his slate, read in his presence the letter it contains, erase what is improper, (not however without appealing to his sense of propriety for license to do so,) and, after dismissing him with words of encouragement and sympathy, proceed to copy and direct it. As a majority of our men and women have improved the privilege thus granted, the honorable gentlemen will at once perceive the arduousness of my labor in this department alone. But in view of the exceedingly favorable opportunity this branch of my labor, in connection with that of reading the responding letters to them, affords me for benefiting the moral through the social feelings, I not only cheerfullyperform the task, but still pray the honorable board not to curtail the privilege.

It will most readily occur to you, gentlemen, that a word or two of admonition or encouragement, from one who has proved himself by a thousand nameless attentions to be a friend, lodged in the heart when softened by reminiscences from home, will do more towards reforming that heart than will the hearing of the most eloquent sermon, delivered by a stranger under ordinary circumstances. This softening of the heart by letters from home, though that "home be ever so humble," I have witnessed daily and have endeavored to improve the occasion to the moral and religious advantage of the individual concerned. Indeed,

this letter writing affords me the principal opportunity of giving personal instruction to the female convicts which I can consistently have; and I am happy in the conviction that the moral fruits thereof have been as apparent and promising, if not as lasting, as those arising from conducting the correspondence of the male prisoners.

In addition to the above named services, I have written the business letters, petitions for pardon, orders, &c., which the honorable board has, from time to time, so kindly permitted the convicts to have executed, and with the same moral effect.

I have also continued the practice of visiting the homes of the convicts as opportunity offered. Among other good results arising from these visits is the knowledge I gain through them of the true character and educational tendencies of the convicts, by which I am prepared to address moral and religious instructions to them severally, with more hope of success. The choir continues to assemble in the chapel every Saturday afternoon, for the purpose of spending an hour to practice together in singing, during which time I generally have the sole charge of them; nor have I, in this or any other intercourse with the convicts, received or witnessed the first word, look or act of theirs indicative of disrespect for my person, office or requirements.

I mention this universal respect not merely as an exhibition of the present "moral and religious fruits" of my labors, but also as indicating thereby the preparedness of the convicts' hearts to receive deeper and more lasting religious impressions from their chaplain's instructions. The fruits of the Sabbath labors are, I think, increasingly favorable. This is apparent from an evident increase of interest, on the part of the convicts generally, in those services, from an increase

of constant and *voluntary* bible readers, and from an increase of the number giving evidence of a radical change of heart. This latter result, gentlemen, is, *after all* (*dico quid scio*) the principal ground of hope for *permanent* reformation in *their cases*. That not a few leave the prison better men and women, if not genuine Christians, than they were when they came, and consequently that the general character of our prison discipline is reformatory—the opinion of many to the contrary notwithstanding—may be gathered from the appended statistics referring to the number of times convicted.

It will be seen by these that only about ten per cent. of the whole number now in prison were ever here before, and that on an average the prison empties itself of its inmates once in every three years.

Now, where are the thousands of convicts who have been discharged during the past nine or ten years?

Sure we are that not over about one hundred of them are here, (of course but 300 have been here during the whole time,) and a far less number, probably, in other prisons. *Where* are they?

Permit me to say, gentlemen, with due modesty, that there can be but few persons better qualified to answer this inquiry *advisedly* than is the author of this report, as I made it a part of my special business, during the seven years of my former chaplaincy and the eighteen months of this, to retain a partial supervision of convicts (especially of those who had given evidence of reformation) *after their discharge*.

This was accomplished by corresponding with them, (I have yet in my possession hundreds of their letters to me,) by visiting them at their homes, by friendly greetings of recognition as I met them in the street and elsewhere, and keeping a memorandum

of such meetings, and by inquiring of sheriffs, &c. By aid of these data I am prepared to say, fearless of successful contradiction, that at least two-thirds of our convicts go out from under your judicious regulations and efficient discipline with genuine purposes of reform, and succeed, more or less completely, in carrying out those purposes.

This I *know* is the *fact* in *scores* of *instances*, and therefore labor on, amidst disappointments and sacrifices, with increased courage. I am still conscious, however, "that the chaplain's labors are comparatively *useless*, *unaided* by a firm, vigilant and uniform discipline," but the aid of such a discipline, in both prisons, during the year, I most heartily acknowledge. I may nevertheless be allowed to say that, in my judgment, had the discipline *generally*, as it has frequently, been made to address itself with equal *vigor and directness* to the *moral*, as it has to the physical feelings of its subjects, it would have been still more efficient in its aid to the chaplaincy, for "a *soft answer* turneth away wrath" as *certainly* as "*withholding* the *rod* spoileth the child."

The statistics herewith given have been taken from the prison register. The correctness of that portion of the statistics referring to temperance I cannot vouch for, as it was given by the convict when he *entered* the prison, and, consequently, when his views respecting what constituted temperance, moderate drinking, &c., were exceedingly loose, and hence he would be very liable to say, in answer to the clerk's question relating to this habit, could he recollect *one day* during the past month *through which he had been sober*, "a *moderate* drinker, sir." I speak advisedly on this subject.

The teachers' reports of both prisons are herewith submitted.

With feelings of sincere gratitude to the Inspectors for their courtesy and kindness, and to all the officers of the prisons for the assistance they have ever been ready to afford me in the discharge of my duties, I remain, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN LUCKEY,
Chaplain.

Sworn before me, this 12th day of December, 1856,

NORWOOD BOWNE,
Inspector of State Prisons.

STATISTICAL TABLES,

Accompanying Chaplain's Report.

TABLE No. 1.

	Males.	Fem's.
Total number of convicts in Sing Sing prison, 30th November, 1856, . .	885	85
Whites, ...	766	67
Blacks, ...	119	18
Natives	464	31
Foreigners	421	54
Of the Foreigners there were,		
From Ireland, ...	227	
Germany, ...	145	
Great Britain, ...	49	
Carried forward, ...	421	

Brought forward, ...	421
British America, ...	12
France, ...	12
Poland, ...	7
At sea, ...	5
Italy, ...	3
Sweden, ...	2
Switzerland, ...	2
Eleven other countries (one each) .	11
	475

Of the whole number there were committed,

	Males.	Fem's.
For crimes against the person, .	126	10
do. property, .	759	75
Total, . . .	885	85

Ages when convicted.

	MALES.		FEMALES.	
	White.	Black.	White.	Black.
15 years of age, . . .	5	3		1
16 years, and less than 20, .	202	40	14	
20 do. do. 30, .	355	63	36	16
30 do do. 40, .	129	11	13	
40 do. do. 50, .	54		2	1
50 do. and over, . .	21	2	2	
	766	119	67	18

Terms of Sentence.

	Males.	Fem's.
For 2 years, and less than 3, . .	270	44
3 do. do. 4, . .	147	9
4 do. do. 5, . .	80	13
5 do. do. 6, . .	151	9
6 do. do. 7, . .	26	
7 do. do. 8, . .	31	2
8 do. do. 9, . .	10	
9 do. do. 10, . .	8	
10 do. do. 11, . .	99	6
11 do. do. 12, . .	3	
12 do. do. 15, . .	16	
15 do. do. 20, . .	14	1
20 do. do. 25, . .	3	
25 do.	1	
10 do. and life, ...	1	
Life, ...	17	1
	885	85

Number of times Convicted.

First time, ...	783	81
Second do., ...	74	3
Third do., ...	22	1
Fourth do., ...	5	
Fifth do., ...	1	
	885	85

Habits of Life.

Temperate, ...	230	37
Intemperate, ...	348	24
Moderate, ...	307	24
	835	85

Twelve per cent. is the average number of recommitments for the last six years!

TEACHERS' REPORTS.

SING SING PRISON, November 19th, 1856.

To the Rev. John Luckey,

Chaplain of the Sing Sing Prison:

We have the gratifying pleasure of submitting herewith, the annual report required by law, in reference to the condition of the school department of the prison, and we would report that the whole number of pupils taught by us in the prison, during the year ending November 30th, 1856, has been about 900. On an average we have had about 400. At the present time we have a register of 502.

The branches taught have been confined chiefly to those ordinarily pursued in common district schools, to wit: alphabet, spelling, reading, writing and cyphering.

Of those who are learning the alphabet we have	3
Spelling,	33
Reading,	76
Writing,	270
Cyphering in addition,	45
do. subtraction,	10
do. multiplication,	21
do. division,	29
do. reduction,	9
do. fractions,	4
do. rule of three and upwards,	2
	502

A great interest has been manifested by the pupils in the studies pursued, and many of them have made marked improvement therein.

In general, the degree of improvement compares favorably with corresponding classes in other schools, and we have spared no pains to make our labors profitable to those for whose benefit they have been instituted, and we think we have awakened a lively interest in the pupils, and feel warranted by their words of assurance and the perceptible improvement which they have made, that "our labors have not been in vain."

We have endeavored to make our calls as frequent as possible, which have been once in about every ten days.

Our time of teaching has been as prescribed by law; we commence immediately after the men are all locked up in their rooms and the ringing of the last bell at night; we teach five days in the week, from one hour and a quarter to one hour and three fourths, each evening.

Our pupils have ranked from every age, from 15 years to 60, and there are a limited few whose age has even exceeded that. The general average may be set down between the ages of 20 and 30, say 25, as that would approximate the nearest in our present calculation.

The result of our labors has been somewhat extenuated in consequence of not having sufficient light for those being instructed, and also in not having our pupils classed. Could we adopt a uniform system of classification, we would be able to exhibit to you a favorable corresponding result, and we do confidently believe that the consummation of our most ardent hopes would be realized.

We remain, dear sir, as ever,

Yours, most respectfully,

GEORGE WRIGHT,
BERNARD CRENY,
Teachers.

To the Rev. J. Luckey,
Chaplain of the Sing Sing Prison:

DEAR SIR,—The school at the female prison, under my instruction, has been continued through the year, with increased interest, and with as much progress as could be expected. There are 33 under instruction, divided into four classes; 29 can read and spell, and 13 can write.

Yours most respectfully,

KATE BIRDSELL,
Teacher.

DATE DUE

MAY 5 '78

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